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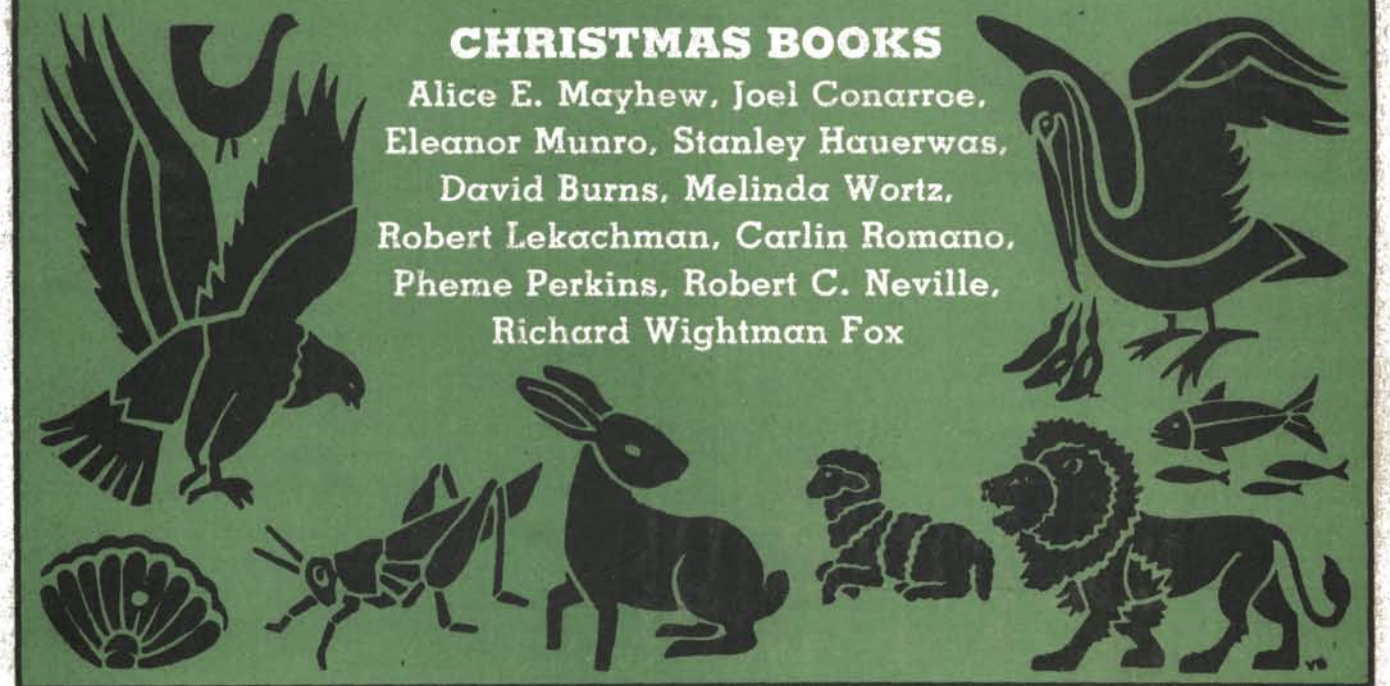
COMMONWEAL

DOMINION OVER THE EARTH

Gabriel Moran

CHRISTMAS BOOKS

Alice E. Mayhew, Joel Conarroe,
Eleanor Munro, Stanley Hauerwas,
David Burns, Melinda Wortz,
Robert Lekachman, Carlin Romano,
Pheme Perkins, Robert C. Neville,
Richard Wightman Fox



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CORRESPONDENCE Catholic thought on war & peace

AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

Bedeviling issue

Hollis, N.Y.

To the Editors: Peter Steinfels's two articles "Heritage Abandoned, Parts I and II" [September 11 & 25] are enlightening reading. They free the May 8 deterrence editorial from its rigid, hard-nosed context. More importantly they illustrate how to criticize with an open mind and in an irenic spirit. Such a bedeviling issue as keeping an adequate measure of peace in a nuclear age needs that type of critique.

But I have a substantive criticism. If I am not mistaken one could search high and low in Mr. Steinfels's two articles for the word immoral used in connection with *Tranquillitas Ordinis. Why? It* sounds like an immoral book to me because it consistently and deliberately uses misleading arguments. And that, it seems to me, makes its intellectual value minimal.

ROLAND LAIRD

Idols of convenience

Notre Dame, Ind.

To the Editors: Thank you so much for Peter Steinfels's careful analysis of George Weigel's recent book ["The Heritage Abandoned?" September 11 & 25]. It does generate wonder how those of us trained in academic methods of integrity can sacrifice them in the interests of a "war of ideas." I should have thought at least that the just war theory might have considerable rules about proper means of carrying on that kind of warfare as well! In fact, however, I would like to call attention to a point missing in your critique, and easily overlooked in Weigel's analysis. That is the simple fact that a small codicil to the just war theory made it virtually inoperative throughout its history: the rider that "the presumption is always with authority."

Our experience in the sixties with strident criticism of this country quite often reflected the *animus* required for each person to overcome that simple presumption. And when that phase subsided, as it did in many of us, we found ourselves nonetheless far more sympathetic with those groups which had warned us from their beginnings how important it is to keep the state in its proper place. The so-called "peace churches" come out of a tradition which recognized early on a simple fact about human nature: that the state is the most convenient idol to which one might transfer unconditional allegiance. And the subsequent sympathy with pacifist perspectives, especially those regarding the state, may well have opened up a new arena for reflection on the part of more traditional Christians.

In short, this would seem a less tendentious explanation of whatever shift has occurred, and I write as one who favors the just war theory, precisely because I can offer examples in recent history (in Uganda and in East Pakistan) where neighboring countries carried out limited hostilities in a manner apparently necessary to save further bloodshed.

DAVID BURRELL, C.S.C.

Re-stating the challenge

Washington, D.C.

I'm grateful that Peter Steinfels [September 11 & 25] has offered such a lengthy analysis of my book, *Tranquillitas Ordinis*. The book was intended to start a major debate, and it seems to have done so. Readers may have also surmised that I have several fraternal corrections to make in response to Steinfels's account of my work. But before we get to that, I think it important to note the significant agreements between Steinfels and me.

We agree that the Catholic debate on war and peace, security and freedom, has been less than satisfactory over the past generation, and this has had unfortunate effects on American political culture.

We agree that there is a distinctive understanding of peace in the classic Catholic tradition: peace ought to be conceived as a matter of political understandings, institutions, and processes.

We agree that the United States is an important experiment in this peace of *tranquillitas ordinis*.

We agree that there is room in the Catholic debate for both just-war theorists and principled pacifists, and that the quality of the dialogue between these two traditions will have an important impact on the church's thought and action.

We agree that totalitarianism threatens the evolution of international public order according to the moral norms of the Catholic heritage. We further agree that there is a connection between peace and freedom; that there is no incongruity between Catholic peace activism and a vigorous defense of the persecuted church; and that many Catholic activists have been remiss in making this linkage.

We agree that American leadership toward a world that is peaceful, secure, and free is a moral imperative that coheres with the best instincts of the American experiment.

We agree that the proportionate and discriminate use of military force can serve the ends of peace, security, and freedom. We agree that non-violent means of forcing change and prosecuting conflict are essential to the pursuit of peace, and that a preference for nonviolent solutions is built into the very struc-

(Continued on page 715)

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COMMONWEAL

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Lame duck soup

During welcoming ceremonies at Tokyo's economic summit last year, five missiles were fired by at the state guest house by an extremist group as visiting heads of state were being welcomed. The rockets fell short. Asked at the time whether he was concerned by the attack, President Reagan replied with characteristic good humor, "No, they missed."

The president and the country's luck have not been so good since then. As two reports made clear last month—the congressional Iran-*contra* board's final summation, and the joint deficit-reduction committee's response to Wall Street's Black Monday—much capital has been squandered since Tokyo, both political and economic. "They missed" has become the story of the Reagan stewardship in general, from responding to AIDS to Supreme Court appointments.

"It is time to try something different," said President Reagan as he launched his new economic program in 1981. He has done it with a vengeance, replacing "tax and spend" with "spend and borrow." As a result, *now* is the time to try something different. And yet, in the words of Senator Packwood (R-Oreg.), the two-year, $76-billion deficit reduction plan finally extracted by the Congress and the president at the midnight hour is "a miserable little pittance." While some are necessarily putting on a grateful face, the real story is that a historic opportunity has been squandered. What the Tower Commission called a "failure of responsibility" in the political and foreign-policy realms must now be said of this administration in the economic sphere as well. The administration, the victim of its rhetoric on the mortal sin of taxation, was not able to bite the reality of raising crucial revenues.

The people know better, though of course they will not be the first to line up at the IRS. The fact is, they were waiting and willing to respond to a call for sacrifice, as long as it was across the board and applied fairly to all. There was even an openness for putting a 2 percent cap on cost-of-living increases on entitlement programs, a plan which had real, long-term significance for reducing federal deficits. Instead, the president pulled the 2 percent proposal off the table, a lame-duck president, immune to the wrath of voters, who might one day have been hailed for having chosen the most fair and expeditious means of seeing the nation through the present turmoil. Instead, that crisis remains squarely on the stove, ready to spill over the whole kitchen with the next dire economic indicators.

What can be done to shore up the economic edifice? There is a significant reservoir of pragmatic wisdom in this country that can transcend bipartisanship. Congress should call for the establishment of a commission to study the economic situation and invite the president's endorsement. And finally what will still be required is more than a little bit of luck. Perhaps Mr. Reagan can reach back in his past for just enough of that.

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BIRTH-MARKETING

Mary Beth and Richard Whitehead have petitioned for divorce in the New Jersey courts. Cited as factors in the breakup of their marriage were the stress of Mrs. Whitehead's struggle to retain custody of "Baby M," the infant she bore as a surrogate for Elizabeth Stern; the time involved in her subsequent activities in opposing surrogate motherhood; and now her pregnancy by another man. This recent turn of events is an unfortunate but perhaps fitting finale to the Baby M trial with its combination of surrealistic bioethics and circus atmosphere.

The Baby M case appalled many people. Unfortunately this initial revulsion over surrogate arrangements has failed to concentrate the legislative mind. Only three states have passed legislation dealing with some aspect of surrogacy: Arkansas makes the contracting couple automatically the legal guardian of a child born of an unmarried surrogate; Nevada exempts surrogate contracts from the ban on payments connected with adoption; Louisiana makes contracts for paid surrogacy unenforceable. The three examples point up the problem. Most states have accepted the premise that surrogacy is destined to become a routine practice. The majority of pending bills will, in fact, make that a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Only five states (Alabama, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, and Wisconsin) are considering banning surrogacy altogether. Bills before another seven (Florida, Kentucky, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, and Pennsylvania) would prohibit the commercialization of surrogacy by banning payments, thereby effectively limiting its practice, with some of the states allowing unpaid surrogacy under stringent regulations. Michigan is alone in considering penalties, a fine of $10,000 and up to one year in jail for a person entering into a surrogate contract; and up to $50,000 and five years in prison for an outside party to the arrangement, presumably doctors, lawyers, or other brokers. Thirteen states have established or are considering establishment of commissions to advise on appropriate measures. The usual composition of such commissions and their tendency to compromise suggest they are a formula for permitting surrogate motherhood, at least in the absence of an alert and concerned public opinion.

A recent survey in the *Hastings Center Report* (October/November 1987) examines all of the pending state legislation on surrogacy and, perhaps unintentionally, catalogs the singular predicaments embodied in this "modest proposal."

- To pay or not to pay? What is a reasonable amount? If the mother miscarries, is partial payment in order or must she return any payments or the costs of services she has received?
- Who may contract with a surrogate? Infertile couples only? Married couples only? Physically and mentally fit? Able to provide for the child? Criminal record? Genetic or other physical problems that could affect childrearing?
- What about informed consent and counseling? For the surrogate? And her husband? For the contracting couple?
- Can the surrogate's behavior be regulated during pregnancy? For prenatal care, diet, and activities? Is her right to abortion restricted? Can she be required to abort a child with a genetic defect?

Don't leave. There's more!

- What if the surrogate changes her mind? Insurance for care of the child in case the parents die? Recordkeeping and the child's right to know of its origins?

As with many new biological and social practices, lines need to be drawn and conflicting interests need legislative resolution. Drawing lines always leaves some people on the unhappy side of them. That is no reason for fudging the question of whether this society is crossing into an era where children are marketed. In the case of commercial surrogate motherhood, the line should be drawn under the word No.

ROMAN HOLIDAY

Instructed by past experience and knowledgeable observers, we expected very little from the recent synod on the laity, and the synod fully met our expectations. The four American bishops did their best to put a cheerful face on things, although phrases like "we did not pedal backward" (Archbishop Weakland) and "not negative" (Cardinal Bernardin) suggest that their enthusiasm is less than unbounded. The American delegation, it should be underlined, acquitted itself honorably. The U.S. bishops (the Canadians, too) played a major role in getting the issue of women's ministry on the agenda, and it does not seem to be their fault that the issue was deflected, or rather drowned in the molasses of ecclesiastical rhetoric. The extensive pre-synod consultations will not go to waste but will undoubtedly inform church life right here in the U.S.

Still, there is a truth that needs to be spoken, and spoken plainly. The synod was a sham, an insult to the intelligence of the laity who were supposed to be the subject of its deliberations. No doubt the bishop-delegates and others present were sometimes moved by the ceremonies and testimony revealing the vitality and diversity of the Catholic church. But the synod had a specific task—to provide insight and guidance regarding the "Vocation and Mission of the Laity in the Church and in the World Twenty Years after the Second Vatican Council." In carrying out this assignment it looked for all the world like one of those cardboard congresses periodically called by one-party dictatorships to devise a filigree of verbiage around decisions made behind the scenes by others.

The synod's closing message expressed to the whole church, "and especially to you, our Christian lay men and women," the "wish to share . . . what took place." A fine sentiment, after an assiduous effort at secrecy had assured that there would be as little sharing as possible of the synod's real deliberations. The message is full of ringing phrases, none of which cost anyone anything to declaim. It is good to discover, as Cardinal Lorscheider of Fortaleza, Brazil, has noted, that

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the texts of the synod do not avoid the conciliar language of "people of God." Still, one fears for the day when the laity begins to sense that even the language most charged with the spirit of Vatican II can be turned out by the yard and used to circumvent real questions.

The synod's other product was a list of fifty-four propositions, mostly vague or deliberately ambiguous, which were presented to the pope to be transformed into whatever shape he wishes. There was no apparent justification for this abdication of responsibility. Expressing disappointment at both the synod's secrecy and its outcome, the Canadian Archbishop Donat Chiasson told the *Toronto Star* that "there was nothing to hide except the nothingness."

The synod as an institution of genuine collegiality, or even of simple consultation, is practically dead. Defenders of centralized papal power may welcome this development because they think that authority is a zero-sum affair. They are wrong. Collegiality gives credence to papal authority. Crippling the synod will only discredit Rome. It is high time some friend of Rome says this with unmistakable bluntness.

A CHANGE OF EDITORS

AN ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

On January 4, 1988 *Commonweal* editor Peter Steinfels will become chief religion correspondent for the *New York Times*. Mr. Steinfels first joined the staff of *Commonweal* in 1964 and served through 1971. He rejoined the staff in 1978 as executive editor, and then became Editor in 1984 upon the retirement of James O'Gara. He has led the magazine through a number of very important changes, and he takes with him to the *Times* the gratitude of the Board of Directors of the Commonweal Foundation, of his fellow editors, and, we feel sure, of the journal's readers for what adds up to seventeen years of service.

Charged with the duty of selecting a replacement as Editor, the Board of Directors of the Commonweal Foundation began its search without prior commitments. At the first special meeting of the Board, a broad list of potential candidates was surveyed. At that time the immediate and unanimous feeling of the Board members, minus Mr. Steinfels's participation, was that an outstanding candidate for the position was at hand. She had a demonstrated record in directing journals of this sort, including experience on the business as well as editorial side of magazine publishing. She had written widely on religious, ethical, and social issues. She had established an independent voice that reflected the concerns for which *Commonweal* has long been noted. That candidate was Margaret O'Brien Steinfels. The Board recognized that even in an age that discusses which Dole should run for president, it is unusual for an outgoing editor to be replaced by a spouse. But it was our firm conviction that the leading candidate should not be excluded for this reason.

In a subsequent meeting, with Mr. Steinfels continuing to absent himself from the discussion, the Board interviewed the candidate at length, carefully reviewed her qualifications, and confirmed its earlier impression.

An honors graduate of Loyola University in Chicago, Ms. Steinfels later took courses at Columbia and the Sorbonne and earned an M.A. in history at New York University. She is the author of *Who's Minding the Children?*, a well-received history and political analysis of child care in America, originally published by Simon and Schuster in 1974 and later made available in paperback. In addition to contributing chapters to other books, Ms. Steinfels has written for the *National Catholic Reporter*, *New Catholic World*, the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Psychology Today*, *Channels*, *Jubilee*, and, of course, *Commonweal*, as well as other journals. For the better part of the seventies, she was Editor of the *Hastings Center Report*, the leading journal in the field of bioethics. After a short stint in book publishing (social science editor at Basic Books), she became business manager and then executive editor (as well as a columnist) at *Christianity and Crisis*, a distinguished ecumenical biweekly journal with concerns parallel to *Commonweal*'s. Most recently she has been Director of Publications for the National Pastoral Life Center and founding Editor of *Church*, a handsome and successful quarterly magazine for parish staff and other pastoral ministers.

In the light of such qualifications and experience, the Board was unanimous in selecting Margaret O'Brien Steinfels as the next Editor for *Commonweal*. We are happy to report that she will be assuming the position's responsibilities early in the new year.

Edward S. Skillin, President
James O'Gara, Vice-President
Paul V. Farrell
Daniel M. Murtaugh

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A FACT OF LIFE

AIDS & EXPLICIT EDUCATION

Recently I attended a conference on AIDS, on assignment for another magazine. The speakers approached the subject from a number of perspectives; they represented such fields as medicine, public policy, journalism, law, and the insurance business.

There is a widespread agreement on several points among almost all of the people who have looked seriously at the subject. One area of agreement is that no cure is in sight; but looking for a cure, a "magic bullet" to stop the disease once it has been contracted, makes more sense at this point than looking for a vaccine against it. There are some promising anti-AIDS drugs, but nothing that can be called a cure; nor is there anything close to one. There are medical and non-medical reasons which would rule out an anti-AIDS vaccine, at least for the present: the virus mutates so rapidly that a vaccine seems unlikely, and the potential for liability claims, which would result from the inability of a firm to make any solid promise for its vaccine, scares companies away from putting much money into research. Another agreement is that much of the anti-AIDS legislation proposed at state and national levels is hysterical, wasteful of money which could be spent in other ways, and counterproductive as well.

The disease is spreading at an especially fast pace into the black and Hispanic populations, primarily through intravenous drug use and heterosexual intercourse, and not enough is being done to educate people in these communities—or in most other communities, for that matter. This is especially tragic, because it is clear that AIDS education, if it is explicit enough, works. In some homosexual communities under study the disease has practically stopped spreading, and this is entirely the result of education and consequent changes in behavior. Though some health-care workers are careless, most know by now that such guards as rubber gloves for people who come into contact with blood products and other potentially dangerous body fluids make more sense than a leisurely attitude toward what are, after all, relatively easy precautions.

There is a widespread agreement that this is an epidemic, and that no end is in sight. This will not come as news, of course, to anyone who reads a newspaper. But what also will not come as news is the fact that the sort of education which most health experts agree is necessary, and has been proven to be effective, is also terribly controversial. It involves a degree of explicitness which television networks believe, probably correctly, would be offensive to many viewers. On the other hand, public ignorance is appalling. Something like 40 percent of those polled believe that you can get AIDS by donating blood.

There are conservatives who argue that if people behaved as they should sexually, abstaining outside of marriage and remaining monogamous within, we would have nothing to fear from AIDS. I agree with the argument as far as it goes, but it doesn't really go very far, and is wrong-headed on a couple of grounds.

One is that some professional workers (dentists and dental assistants, doctors, nurses, and people who handle blood products) are at some risk, no matter how faithful they may be to wives, husbands, or a single lover. If they contract the disease or are found to carry the virus, they may pass it on. The other point on which conservatives are wrong has to do with original sin. People lie to other people, even to faithful partners, and some—no matter how sensible your moral advice may be—will have sex in ways which, if they they are ignorant, endanger them and, ultimately, all of society. They should at least be educated to reduce the risk, if they are not willing to be abstinent. The Surgeon General has offended many conservatives who thought he was on their side, by endorsing explicit AIDS education. He has pointed out, quite wisely, that while the subject does indeed involve morality, it is also a severe medical problem and must be dealt with practically. It is not enough to wish that people would behave as many of them will not. There is also in some of the conservative reaction to the AIDS crisis a cruel implication that this is what "they" (homosexuals and drug users) deserve, a kind of divine judgment. Someone has pointed out that this must mean a divine endorsement of lesbianism, since lesbians are at least risk.

Is there anything at all to the conservative objection to explicit AIDS education, in schools and on television? I think

"Simon, dear, I don't think it's a good idea to share your AIDS information pack."

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there is, but it is indicative of a problem which is in its way as tragic as the AIDS epidemic itself, and can't be dealt with at all simply.

Those who argue that sex education should be left to parents, and who worry that schools (public schools anyway) will have to teach sexual matters in a way that leaves values out of the picture have half a point. That is, any sex education which does not include moral values is distorted. In a secular, pluralistic society, however, it is difficult to think of values which are agreed-upon enough to make them "safe" for teaching in public schools. There is an additional worry: if ever there was one, couldn't this be seen as indicating approval of sex outside of marriage? And if students could give this interpretation to something learned in a sex education course, whatever a teacher might intend, doesn't this in practical fact amount to teaching values — precisely the values many parents do *not* want their children to learn? As far as television is concerned, there has been an argument that in most American homes television viewing is unsupervised, and children who are too young will be disturbed or made morbidly curious by explicit anti-AIDS education. And again, there is the worry that televised statements which say things like "If you have sex, use a condom" imply that the choice is a morally neutral one, something many people will not grant.

I understand these objections. They must be countered, however, with the simple fact that many, if not most, parents do not talk with their children about sex, in any but the most generalized and embarrassed ways. Most young people learn whatever they do about sex from the media and from their contemporaries. AIDS education left to parents, churches, and synagogues will be given about as much attention as parents and religious institutions usually are. Television and movies currently teach that sex is a pleasure which doesn't involve commitment, or even minimal responsibility for the welfare of others. Love scenes between married couples are quite rare, and you would think from the lack of any mention of either pregnancy or contraception that the former had nothing at all to do with sex.

My own feeling is that explicit AIDS education on television is an unfortunate social necessity, and is more important than whatever may or may not be taught in school; it should come as part of the banal dramas which have already taught so many bad lessons, or in straightforward documentary form. The worst way, probably, would be to hope that an acceptance of televised condom ads will make much of a difference. These will claim too much for particular products, and probably not be any more explicit than are ads for insurance, fast food, and beer, which seem to be ads for love, good times, and camaraderie.

Having said this, I find myself sympathizing with a mood which underlies the conservative objection. Conservatives, at least, understand that the lessons which pervade our culture are generally bad ones. They object in too piecemeal a fashion, and in this case their objections are misplaced. However, I have met a lot of liberal, secular sorts who assume that adolescents will be sexually active, and believe that there is nothing at all wrong with this. They actually do want to see a value-free form of sex education taught — or rather, one which says that, where sex is concerned, values are entirely subjective. I have no patience with the reactionary and naive parent who believes that an adolescent child will be uninterested in sex unless he or she is told about it or sees it portrayed on TV. All that can cure adolescent heat is radical surgery, and I am not sure even that would work. But the media really do deliver a terrible message, not only about sex but about life in general. Television, radio, and other forms of noise are absolutely pervasive, and have become whatever culture we have. They stress individualism, selfishness, greed, envy, and narcissism. They create a restlessness and need for distraction which are more than annoying; these things are killing us. Perhaps some of what can seem like mindless reaction is in fact an expression of despair.

Institutions which should be strong and formative — the family, shared religious belief — are in fact not strong at all, and so there is the feeling among some desperate people that we must influence, as best we can, the bits of culture we share: a mediocre school system, law, and a corrupt and corrupting media. AIDS education is necessary, and without a currently forbidden degree of explicitness it will be nearly useless. But the reaction which the need for AIDS education has provoked is at least in part the result of a legitimate perception that there is more wrong with our society than the threat presented by AIDS, and that what is wrong with us can kill more than the body.

OF SEVERAL MINDS Abigail McCarthy

DON'T CALL US, WE'LL CALL YOU

WHAT THE SYNOD SAID TO WOMEN

Having lived long and seen much, I am not surprised that the month-long synod on the laity ended leaving the laity just where we were when it began — in the pews. If we have lately shared responsibility in matters of ministry, policy, and practice, we are reminded that we have done so strictly by sufferance on the part of the clergy. Many of the burgeoning class of church professionals who staff the ecclesiastical, charitable, and educational institutions of the church, who literally keep them alive in this time of declining vocations, have a right to feel keenly disappointed.

Women in the church whose hopes were raised by the many early interven-

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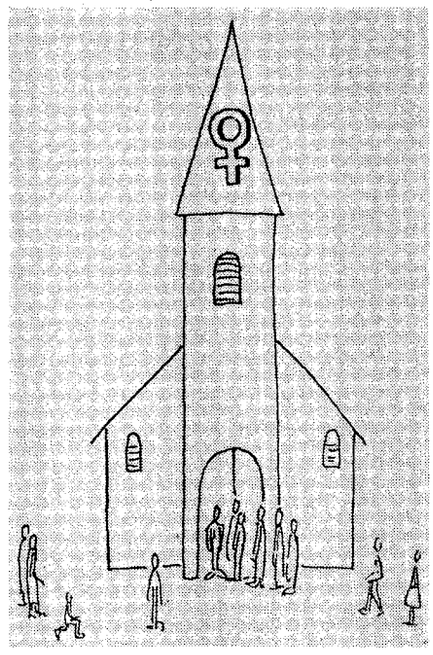
tions asking for greater roles for women saw those hopes dashed in a few short weeks. I am not surprised at that either, but—oh, my brothers — it is really too much to expect me and other women to accept this on the grounds of "specificity" or "non-specificity" as the case may be. The American bishops had asked in the interventions that women be allowed to serve at the altar and as lectors at Mass. Archbishop Weakland, in a personal intervention, had asked that women be allowed to serve fully in all non-ordained ministries. Not awfully bold at the end of the twentieth century, but heartening.

In the course of the synod, however, the bishops' minds were changed. They experienced "the impact of differing cultures and conditions in shaping the appropriate pastoral response. . . . Specific implications," they said, "must be worked out in the specific situation." So the requests that women might serve at the altar and as lectors were deleted. Archbishop May, speaking for the American bishops, said that the whole world had to be considered. Never mind that it is pretty hard to think of a late-twentieth-century culture (outside of the ayatollah's) where representatives of the majority of the baptized serving in the sanctuary or pulpit would be too unsettling.

Let us not talk of specificity; let us talk of the tenacious obduracy to change in male-dominated institutions. Take politics. The first American woman was elected to Congress in 1916. Now, almost three-quarters of a century later, only a tiny fraction of the members of Congress are women — and there may be fewer after the next election. Some women have made it to the level of middle management in business — and are stuck there for the foreseeable future.

This obduracy is not necessarily related to the universal problem of how those who hold power can ever be persuaded to share it, let alone yield it. It has as much to do with the ability to see and to comprehend what one sees. If there is one field, for example, in which women have been conceded a kind of equality in the last few centuries, it is that of literature. In the English-speaking and European world, women emerged as writers



in the eighteenth century and many became celebrated authors in the nineteenth century.

When I sat down recently to prepare a lecture on women as writers in the twentieth century, it seemed to me that there had been a veritable explosion of women writers of significance and literary importance. The names swarmed into my mind. In the first half of the century alone you had such great names as Edith Wharton, Willa Cather, Katherine Anne Porter, Virginia Woolf, Sigrid Undset, Selma Lagerlof, Ellen Glasgow, Flannery O'Connor — any one of them the equal of their male contemporaries, several of them, like Virginia Woolf, unique influences on the other writers of their generation. Yet in male institutions they have been almost invisible.

The certifiers of literary excellence refused to acknowledge them. When the National Institute of Arts and Letters held its first election in 1904, only one woman was elected — Julia Ward Howe, who, said Malcolm Cowley, was more of an institution than a woman. It was more than three decades later when, after much argument, a woman, *one* woman, Edith Wharton, was elected to the Academy, the upper house of the Institute.

Absolutely astonishing, however, was the failure to recognize these women in the supposedly detached and scholarly world of the universities, especially in the halls of ivy. Literary historian and biographer Phyllis Rose tells us (*Writing of Women*, Wesleyan, 1983) that when she graduated from Harvard in *1964* as an English major, she had encountered "only two women on the reading lists of all the courses I took: Jane Austen and George Eliot." Nineteenth-century authors! They conformed, she thought, to the male idea of what a writer should be. But, in general, the instructors could only see women as minor writers. Only men were major. If this inability to see even the greatest women writers as equal obtains in the non-threatening world of literature, what can we expect of the power centers?

Yet Rose's account of how change occurred in academia is suggestive. She traces the "canon formation" which transformed Virginia Woolf from a woman writer to one of the "genderless greats." A combination of acclaim in the media, feminist political pressure, and the change in constituency, as women joined the student bodies and faculties of the Ivy League, all played a part. At bottom, we can surmise, that change really began when the new constituency became *necessary* to those universities.

Perhaps there are parallels. If it were not for media interest and feminist pressure, the role of women would not have been mentioned at the synod at all. Change will occur, perhaps, as the constituency changes. The final proposition of the synod reads in part, "The synod gratefully acknowledges the work of women in fostering vocations in the priesthood and the religious life" — a work largely of the past, of another era. There is no measure of how its attrition affected the great falling off in vocations, but it is worth thinking about. And may a historian I know not be right when she explains why the crowds during the papal visit fell far short of predictions in New Orleans, San Antonio, even Detroit: "It was Mama who got the family scrubbed and out to church events — and she's not doing that any more." Can obduracy be softened and the ability to see sharpened only by self-interest and the need for an institution to survive in the form in which we have known it?

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DOMINION OVER THE EARTH

DOES ETHICS INCLUDE ALL CREATURES?

GABRIEL MORAN

I recently attended a seminar by one of the leading ethicists in the country. He described the outline of a project in which he has been a participant; in a series of volumes soon to be published, a group of ethicists is attempting to refocus the discussion of ethics. After his presentation, someone asked if there had been any discussion of the treatment of nonhuman animals. The ethicist was somewhat perplexed and intrigued. To his recollection, the issue had never been raised during the several years of discussion.

I was not overly surprised by his answer, but I found it dismaying. Although there is extensive literature on animal rights and cruelty to animals, that particular discourse remains neatly segregated from the main body of ethical discussion in the Western world. A half century ago, Albert Schweitzer wrote that "the time is coming when people will be amazed that the human race was so long before it recognized that thoughtless injury to life is incompatible with real ethics" (*Civilization and Ethics*).

The change of attitude which Schweitzer did foresee is apparently still in our future; at least, any big change among professional ethicists is not yet discernible. However, among ordinary people there has been a slow but steady change over the past two decades.

In making that statement, one is exposed to being considered either a little batty or else a faddish enthusiast for bizarre causes. This "cause" does have its bizarre fringe. Animal rights activists in England and the U.S. have been known to use violence against human beings to save rabbits or mice. No doubt there are misanthropes who die among their hundreds of cats in foul-smelling houses. But to see the issue through such aberrations is no more reasonable than to see respect for human life equated with the bombing of abortion clinics.

The argument can be made that, while horses, chimps, seals, or porpoises should not be tortured, there are far more important issues toward which our moral passion should be directed. The tale of human suffering on any nightly news broadcast is already more than we can handle. I think that this attitude of "yes, but" misses the point which is not simply to add ethical problems to existing ones or to disperse further our limited moral energies. What is at stake is finding an overall moral stance that has deeper roots than either the utilitarian calculus on one side of ethics or the language of individual rights on the other side. The nonhuman animal is a stubborn reminder that morality concerns the reduction of violence, the protection of the vulnerable, the preservation of the life cycle, the union of all things. If the question of nonhuman animals is not part of the reorientation of moral attitude and the reshaping of moral vocabulary, then the "animal rights lobby" may indeed be little more than an ethical sideshow. Thus, a concern with nonhuman animals does not of itself guarantee a new ethical stance, but an obliviousness to the issue strongly suggests that we are still stuck in the rationalism that has dominated modern ethics.

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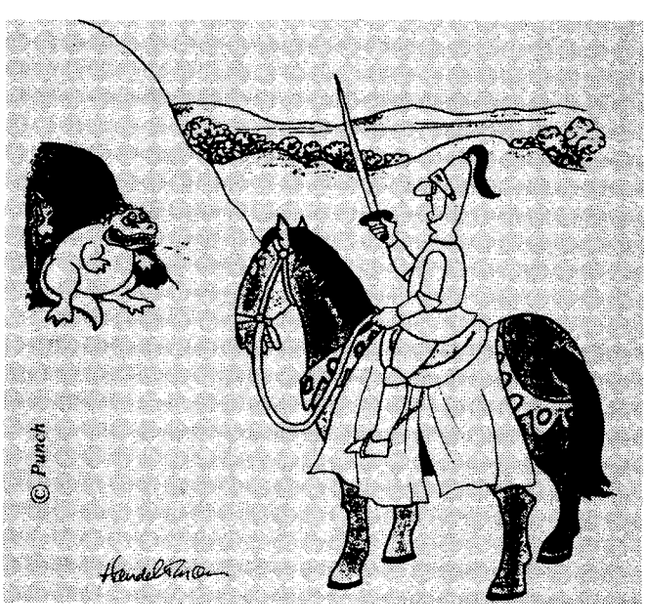

"First of all, I want it understood that we knights of the Round Table are not prejudiced against dragons per se."

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I am very suspicious of the phrase "animal rights." The language of rights is almost the only ethical language that we speak in this country. Thus, when people become sensitive to the issue of "cruelty to animals," the tendency is to extend the concept of rights beyond the human individual. It is assumed that the concept of rights can simply be expanded from blacks to women to gays/lesbians to . . . animals. Granted that the idea of rights is important in modern political systems; the idea has provided important even if limited protection to many human individuals. But crossing the line to the nonhuman world is another kind of step. Indeed, the modern notion of "human rights" was projected *against* the nonhuman world. No sudden flip of the relation will be sufficient for today's problems; a retracing of the path of modern ethics is needed.

Nearly all of modern ethics runs through the person of Immanuel Kant. His primary ethical principle was "to treat each man as an end, never merely as a means." That principle is still quoted widely and solemnly as if it were beyond question. And yet, it is a prescription for ecological disaster. "Man" — the isolated, rational, aggressive male is put at the top of creation. Everything and everyone is put under him. Women and children tend to disappear; even the man's own body should disappear or at least keep quiet. The past is "put behind us" and the future can be whatever "man makes for himself." Nonhuman animals are reduced to "means," that is, to being used in any arbitrary way if it is for the good of "man." Nothing in the world can be called good without qualification, wrote Kant, except the human will.

To his credit, Kant did notice the issue of (nonhuman) animals and agonized a bit over what happens to them in his system. He was impressed by the care which animals give to their young and he thought that they have something to teach us. Nevertheless, animals are not ends in themselves because they are not rational. Thus, if a man shoots his dog, writes Kant, "he does not fail in his duty to the dog, for the dog cannot judge, but the man's act is inhuman and damages in himself that humanity which it is his duty to show toward mankind" (*Lectures on Ethics*).

Kantian ethics is a kind of final abstraction from what was taken to be the Christian view of the world. Kant professed to be giving a philosophical basis for what pious people already believed. However, Nietzsche was to the point in calling Kant "the great delayer," the one who merely postponed the collapse of an ethic that had grown up with modern Western Christianity. Nietzsche did not think that Kant's propped up piety could stand on its own for long, and the twentieth century is proving Nietzsche right on this point. The "man" with his abstract principles is incapable of engaging the bodily suffering that cuts across human and nonhuman worlds. Kantian ethics, centered in agency, deliberately broke with the bodily organism as the basis of ethics.

The chief competitor to Kantian ethics is a utilitarianism based upon the calculation of actual effects in the world of bodily organisms. This line of thinking, most closely associated with Jeremy Bentham, has at least some place for the nonhuman animals. In the nineteenth century, Bentham could write: "The time will come when humanity will extend its mantle over everything which breathes. We have begun by attending to the condition of slaves; we shall finish by softening that of all the animals which assist our labors or supply our wants." The last phrase in this quotation bears noticing; it differentiates Bentham from the likes of Schweitzer. For Bentham, we should improve the condition of all who "assist our labors or supply our wants." The concern is for the useful animals; what reigns on high is "man the user." Although some animals are likely to be well treated in such a system, an ethic centered on possession, use, and consumption is inadequate for today. We need a moral language in which relations other than usefulness are able to be perceived and appreciated.

It is because of the need for relational language that the question is not "man and animal" but human and nonhuman animals. The latter phrase already implies the intrinsic relations that constitute bodily life, including human life. The distinctiveness of the human being emerges in the middle of bodily, animal life not above it. The question then becomes how do human beings respond to, care for, and love what is not entirely outside themselves. "Animal" is not an alien over which the human has dominion. Especially significant for a moral life is how the human being treats other animals that appear to be "useless."

Most discussions in this area are still trapped in the language of "man and animal." Starting from that phrase, animal rights activists launch attacks on "speciesism," a word coined in the mid-1970s to refer to an ideology of human superiority. However, this term can carry a wide range of meaning. At one end, speciesism can refer to the belief that any human desire, however trivial, outweighs any considerations on the side of the nonhuman. That attitude surely needs criticism and a persuasive case can be made against it. At the other end, attacks on speciesism can be made in the name of complete equality among species. The case for equality seems to me impossible to make; the human being properly discriminates, for example, between an animal that obviously suffers pain and organisms that give no evidence of pain. To walk across the lawn, take a shower, or even breathe is to assert that *some* human concerns outweigh *some* nonhuman concerns.

The language of "man and animal" prevents us from asking the appropriate questions about reducing violence to all living things. When the question is "man and animal," and when some competition in this world is inevitable, then the issue of superiority is immediately clear. The vast majority of "men" are going to come down on the side of the "man's" superiority; it is inconceivable that they could do otherwise. If, however, one speaks of human and nonhuman animals, then what first surfaces are the various forms of interrelation and interdependence. One asks how to share, how to understand, how to reach a harmony. Within that context, one has to ask realistically about which human concerns are more important than others; one has to ask about the weighing of a variety of

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important concerns in a total ecological system; one has to accept competition and conflict as a regular fact of life, not just an invention of human civilization. But conflict does not have to mean indiscriminate violence; animals, including the human kind, need ways to negotiate their conflicts. Obviously, the humans are supposed to use their intelligence as part of the process of negotiation: intelligence situated in the middle of bodily life.

Some of these decisions should be morally clear. The human need for food outweighs the apple's proclivity to stay on the tree as long as possible. The human desire for mink coats does not outweigh the sufferings of millions of animals that die excruciatingly painful deaths. Between such extremes as these, human beings have to make fallible and always biased decisions about what lives and what dies. It is not simply a question of whether "man" is or is not superior to the animal; the question concerns the thousands of gradations of importance in the interrelation of living beings. People who accept the language of "man" vs. "animal" and then try to defend the animal are trapped in a futile rebellion. A combination of hidden paternalism and sentimentalism is not going to make the world safe for women, children, men, and nonhuman animals.

Charles Birch and John Cobb, *The Liberation of Life* (Cambridge University, 1981). A panoramic book that brings together contemporary life sciences and a moral outlook.

Leon Kass, *Toward a More Natural Science* (Free Press, 1985). Excellent scientific essays, including reflections on the religious implications of evolution.

Mary Midgley, *Beast and Man: The Roots of Human Nature* (Cornell, 1978). One of the best writers in this area, she brings a strong moral and historical sense to the question of animal life.

James Serpell, *In the Company of Animals* (Basil Blackwell, 1986). A historical study of the treatment of nonhuman animals; he brings out the dual attitude reflected in the domesticating of animals and the hunting of animals for food.

Tom Reagan, Editor, *Animal Sacrifices: Religious Perspectives on the Use of Animals in Science* (Temple, 1986). An excellent collection of essays representing all of the major religions on their attitudes toward experimentation with animals. G.M.

Nearly all of the major religions have been especially concerned with the treatment of nonhuman animals. Both Eastern and Western religions situate the human being at the center of a matrix of living beings. The Jewish-Christian tradition begins with a Creator who brings into existence a hierarchy of things. Each thing is pronounced good, with the living things having a special dignity that gives witness to the "living God." In contrast to the two competing systems of modern ethics in which the good is the object of human desire, Jewish and Christian religions recognize the good to be whatever exists, whatever receives existence from the hand of God.

In the course of history, Jewish and Christian religions seemed to jump too quickly from the general proposition that "everything is good" to the central affirmation that "man is good." Other animals did not receive the affirmation that they deserved. The separating out of the rational, aggressive, controlling "man," has been the glory but also the danger in Western religion. The feminist and ecological movements have frequently regarded Christianity as the enemy. In comparison to Buddhist or Native American religions, Western Christianity has often been deficient in recognizing the sacredness of each living thing. The nonhuman animals tended to get absorbed into an abstraction called nature. With its stress on "man's dominion over the earth," Christianity helped prepare the way for the project of seventeenth-century science: "Man will put nature to the rack and demand answers" (F. Bacon).

With the Kantian ethic having come to such dominance in the nineteenth century, we find it difficult to remember any other way of thinking. In earlier periods of Christianity, there were at least other strands. While Thomas Aquinas was not entirely opposed to Kant on this point, one can perceive some differences, such as in this passage from the *Summa Theologicae*: "Since it happens that even irrational animals are sensible to pain, it is possible for the affection of pity to arise in a man with regard to the sufferings of animals. Now it is evident that if a man practices a pitiful affection for animals, he is all the more disposed to take pity on his fellow man."

At least Aquinas in this passage talks about the relation of irrational animals and the other (that is, human) animals, about the need for practicing a pitiful affection for (nonhuman) animals, and about the fact that such affection, far from being in opposition to care for human beings, is joined to such care. The Catholic church often issued warnings against societies for the protection of animals. The reason seems to be the assumption that the human being has a fixed amount of care to dispose of so that any care for nonhumans diminishes care for humans. To Aquinas, "it is evident" that the opposite is the case.

The right wing of contemporary Christianity wishes to have no blurring of the line between "animal" and "man." The result is a furious attack on Darwin and evolution. What is typically defended in "creation science" is the scientific picture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This science provided the background for Kantian ethics, that is, animals

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are things for use, man is mind and soul. While Darwin's theory, when it was extended into social policy, was often used in brutalizing ways, his idea of evolution attempted to restore a sense of unity and dignity to the entire realm of life. The theory of evolution does not "degrade man to the level of the beast"; rather, it affirms life in all of its various forms placing men and women at the responsible center of the whole process.

Such a reintegration does not eliminate all distinctions of moral worth. On the contrary, instead of drawing a single line between what is valuable and what is not, we need numerous moral distinctions. Eastern religions or the life mysticism of a Schweitzer do not offer a perfect model because there is still too much reliance on a single line dividing "life" and everything else. What is respected and sometimes almost deified is "nature" or "life." But moral worth, it seems to me, lies not in such generalized abstractions, but in the concrete reality of living organisms themselves. Surely some moral distinctions have to be made in the continuum of creation; there must exist some reasonable differentiation between dolphins and mosquitoes, redwoods and crabgrass.

At one end of the organic spectrum is the highly complex animal. The animals that humans recognize as most similar to themselves have something akin to personality. The individual in these species asserts its right to exist and to develop toward its own fulfillment. Christopher Lasch, in his book *The Minimal Self* (Norton, 1984), writes: "If men were moved solely by impulse and self-interest, they would be content like other animals, simply to survive. Nature knows no will-to-power, only a will-to-live." Lasch may be right about what "nature knows," but he is wrong about individual nonhuman animals in nature who, like the human kind, assert their preferences and delight in being themselves. Has Lasch never tried to get a cat off his lap or watched chimpanzees at play?

At the other end of the spectrum it is not apparent that the individual has the same value — which is not to say that it is valueless. If a cockroach can reproduce 400,000 offspring, it is difficult to believe that it has a special parental feeling for each of its progeny. If an organism's life expectancy is by human measuring a single day, can it have a sense of historical development toward maturity? Perhaps. But "nature" certainly seems to be saying something different at this end of the spectrum. The existing reality even here is an individual not a general life force. In regard to these life forms, however, human beings must realistically attend to the protection of the species rather than every individual of the species. A person who takes pleasure or spends a lot of time in killing bugs may be morally obtuse; but a person who suffers guilt or spends much time in trying to avoid the killing of a single bug may also be misdirecting his or her moral concern.

What we should be morally concerned about in this country is the continuing destruction of whole species. In classical and medieval times, philosophers considered it important that the whole chain of being be complete. The theologians held that once God had decided to create, then He had to create every kind of thing. Their science may have been primitive but perhaps their moral sense was correct. At least, contemporary humans ought to consider as morally important the permanent destruction of species, which human beings had no part in creating and which had been here for hundreds of thousands of years. The Eastern respect for life and Western scientific detail need finally to be combined so that we can protect in effective ways the ecological texture of life.

Returning to the other end of the spectrum, we can see that the protection of complex nonhuman animals also involves a sense of moral and aesthetic wholeness. But it also involves a refocusing of the question upon the individual's well being. As we should not unnecessarily inflict pain upon a human being, so a dog or a cow or a deer merits our concern not to impose pain on the basis of human whim. Of course, the meaning of "necessary pain" raises difficult questions.

One can distinguish today three areas of debate over the treatment of nonhuman animals: cosmetics, experimentation, and food.

Starting with the first and easiest, one can say simply that the use of animals for cosmetic purposes ought to be banned. At an earlier period of human history, the use of an animal's fur for keeping a person alive may have been justifiable. The human hunter and the nonhuman animal may have confronted one another at the level of survival. Today, however, the fur industry uses methods that are barbaric in order to produce a product that is unnecessary.

Experimentation is a more complicated area. Some people argue for a complete ban on the use of nonhuman animals in the laboratory. I do not see that position as morally necessary. What we could hope for, however, is increasing openness about what is being done and how. For example, the forced feeding of toxic substances to nonhuman animals in order to see if 50 percent of them die is a form of protecting human life that is out of proportion to the good being sought. In contrast, the use of some animals in developing a serum to stop an epidemic is a position that could gain support from Eastern religions as well as Western science. There remain complicated questions about how animals are obtained for laboratories, how they are kept in captivity, and how they are actually used. Sensitive experimenters and well enforced legal codes could reduce the amount of pain that lab animals suffer.

Finally, there is food. A total ban on animals for food is not likely to happen although there has been a dramatic shift away from a red meat diet. Health concern more than the moral treatment of nonhuman animals appears to be the reason, but healthy diet also has its proper place in morality. The argument of this essay does not necessarily lead to vegetarianism. But at the least it does lead to questioning how meat is produced and whether we need further radical changes in the direction of deriving protein from nonanimal sources. Most of us are completely sheltered from the harsh reality between the animal grazing contentedly in a field and the piece of steak on our plate. Of course, the animal might not have had existence at all if it were not being grown for food and, furthermore, scientific

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methods can lessen pain as well as mass produce it. But I wonder if people were to see at close range how milk-fed calves live in motionless and darkened existence, whether the same people would order veal marsala in a restaurant. Perhaps they still would do so, but their sensitivity to allowing excruciating animal existence for unnecessary human luxury is not given the chance to be tested.

Vegetarians provide a witness of protest against the rest of the meat-eating culture. That witness needs the cooperation of those who wish to reform eating patterns in less radical ways. Animals can be cultivated for food that form a more efficient part of the ecological cycle. A continued reduction in the amount of meat would be good for human health as well as nonhuman discomfort. A shift toward eating more fish has been occurring. As this shift continues, it is crucially important that natural cycles of fish life in the ocean not be destroyed. Life on earth does involve some competition and conflict; the human being in particular cannot avoid inflicting some pain. However, they can today combine scientific knowledge and moral sensitivity so as to lessen unnecessary pain to all the animals. The humans have an appropriate predilection for the human animal but their feeling for the defenseless nonhuman animal is a good test of their resistance to violence everywhere.

MORE THAN A PEACEMAKER

THE POLITICAL WRITINGS OF OSCAR ARIAS

J.S. FUERST

Since the peace plan proposed by President Oscar Arias Sanchez of Costa Rica and ratified by the five Central American countries is becoming known to the American public because of the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval which the Nobel Prize represents, it is vital to examine the thinking of this political economist-statesman whose writings are as extensive, though hardly with the same orientation, as the "late" Justice Bork.

In the area of foreign policy, Oscar Arias has long been a conciliator on the subject of Nicaragua. No great friend of the Sandinistas, Arias has over many years indicated, publicly and privately, his uneasiness about the actions of the Sandinistas. He has questioned many of their actions, called for free elections and dialogue with dissidents, and urged a freer flow of information in Nicaragua. At the same time, he has been equally uneasy about the actions of the current U.S. administration. During Costa Rica's 1986 presidential campaign, he reiterated that the U.S. should be giving economic and social aid to all of Central America, rather than attempting to bring the Sandinistas into line through military means. Arias has refused to meet with *contra* leader Adolfo Calero or to give him a visa for Costa Rica, has restricted the Costa Rican activities of Eden Pastora, and has countermanded the agreement made with the CIA by his predecessor, Alberto Monge, to allow any use of a U.S.-constructed airfield in northeast Costa Rica as a *contra* base of operations.

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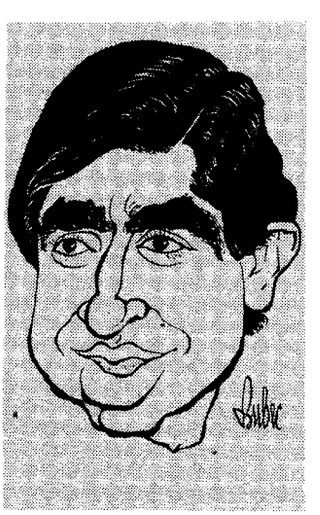
In his short inaugural address of March 1986, Arias affirmed his belief in the principles of peace and neutrality, and his rejection of military force as a means of settling disputes. "Change," he said, "must come about through the rule of law." He believes in the necessity of trade with Nicaragua, free immigration between the countries, and settlement of border disputes by discussion rather than military means.

Therefore his initiation of the peace plan in the light of the fumbling operations of the Contadora group and the machinations of the U.S. government should not have come as a surprise to those acquainted with his past statements. His present five-nation plan for a cease-fire, national reconciliation and dialogue with dissidents, free elections in 1988, suspension of outside military aid, and national and international supervision is merely a spelling out of a position he and his key aide, ex-Chilean John Biehl, have long held.



For those who would probe his views on basic socio-economic issues, Arias has written extensively. He is a great admirer of C. Wright Mills, whose own third-world position was summed up in his characterization of "liberalism":

To the world's range of

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enormous problems, liberalism responds with its verbal fetish of freedom. The world is hungry; the liberal cries, "Let us make it free." The world is tired of war; the liberal cries, "Let us arm for peace." The peoples of the world are without land; the liberal cries, "Let us beg the oligarchy to parcel out some of their land." In sum, the most grievous charge against liberalism is that it is provincial and irrelevant to the major problems of the world.

In 1977 Oscar Arias put it this way in his book *Costa Rica in the Year 2000*: "There must be a fairer distribution of wealth, income, and opportunities. If our [Costa Rican] middle and upper classes persist in maintaining their present levels of consumption and property ownership, they will lose the social and political peace that they have enjoyed for so many years. While such redistribution is complex and difficult to accomplish, it is precisely for this reason that we must redouble our efforts and be bold in achieving results."

In approaching the redistributional problem, Oscar Arias has long recognized the key role that the policies for farmers, farm laborers, and industrial workers must play in any Costa Rican program. He has emphasized "the great necessity for helping small farmers and workers obtain a fairer share of the country's wealth."

This philosophy and its principles have been put to the test in the first two years of the Arias administration. His first secretary of agriculture, Alberto Esquivel, was a strong proponent of subsidies for small farmers. For a considerable time, Arias backed this position. He had written, "the big problem of small farmers is that of productivity, that of providing enough food for their families and doing it efficiently." It was on this issue of efficient productivity that one of the big brouhahas of Arias's administration took place. It involved an internal power struggle in mid-1987 between the finance minister, Fernando Naranjo, and the Bank of Costa Rica's president, Eduardo Lizano, on the one side, and Alberto Esquivel, the minister of agriculture, on the other.

At first, Arias backed Esquivel and his protectionist subsidies for small, "inefficient" farmers and their bean, rice, and corn crops, a point of view that Arias himself had long espoused. Nevertheless, when Lizano resigned in opposition to this policy, and the World Bank and the IMF objected, and when conservative pressures began building against it, Arias had to yield. Esquivel was sacrificed to what seemed the "general welfare" of the country, as the financial people saw it, and Lizano returned. The farm subsidies were to be gradually withdrawn, although Arias promised to have further discussions. Although the farmers and farm workers struck on the streets of San Jose, the leaders of the strike clearly recognized the sympathetic attitude of Oscar Arias and asked rhetorically, "Who is running the country, Oscar Arias or the IMF?"

Along with a belief in the importance of improving the economic welfare of the rural poor, Arias has maintained a skepticism, if not a basic distrust, toward the goodwill of the private bankers. In his book, *Pressure Groups and Costa Rica,* Arias singles out the private bankers as a pressure group primarily interested in their own welfare, a group that has to be controlled in the interest of the common good. The private bankers have not been happy with some of the steps that his government has taken to control the quality and quantity of credit. In fact, according to Don "Pepe" Figueres, who first nationalized banking, it was this move that was largely responsible for keeping the high standard of living in Costa Rica, relative to the other Latin American countries. Nevertheless, on the banking front, as in the agricultural subsidies, President Arias has had to give ground and allow more flexibility to private banks than he wanted. Still, he and most of the top financial and political leaders stand four-square on the issue of debt renegotiation for Costa Rica at an increased term of years, a reduced interest rate, and a deferred initial payment.

In his book, Arias writes that although pressure groups of all kinds determine what policies eventuate, individuals in association with such groups — whether unions, farm associations, or cooperatives — can make a real difference. Arias indicates a strong faith in being able to achieve a better and fairer distribution through the democratic process. In spite of his belief in the efficacy of groups, he emphasizes that individuals have to be involved at the grass-roots level. One of the most significant statutes with which he was associated before becoming president was designed to decentralize decision-

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making to the municipal and regional levels as much as possible. As Arias told me, "This decentralization of decision making is a real risk, but so is life."

A major feature in Arias's economic plans for Coast Rica is the extension of the cooperative movement, whose National Federation is presently headed by former Secretary of Agriculture Rodolfo Navas Alvarado. During the last year and a half, President Arias has worked closely with the National Federation. He has stressed in his writings the great necessity for Costa Rica as well as other developing countries to make more use of cooperatives, substituting them for state-owned enterprises. During the Monge as well as the Arias administrations, the government of Costa Rica has made serious attempts to transfer some of the industries operated under CODESA, the umbrella organization for state corporations, to cooperative sponsorship. Top officials in the U.S. AID commission in Costa Rica told me that they would countenance no such transfer on any general basis because they did not trust the cooperative leadership and were unwilling to give grants or loans for any purposes other than privately owned corporations, except in special and unusual circumstances. They reasoned that the cooperatives were too socially minded, too political, and are not sufficiently concerned with "the bottom line." Oscar Arias told me several years ago that he believed it was important to oppose AID on this point, and that it was very important for the United States to realize that third-world countries like Costa Rica cannot depend solely on the private enterprise, but must have a strong and growing cooperative movement operating in the farming area, the housing area, the consumer distribution area, as well as many others. Last April, at a festival sponsored by the cooperative movement, Arias stated that, "Since my assumption of the presidency, I have taken on the challenge of extending cooperatives in every corner of the country and in substituting cooperatives for state ownership wherever possible."

Another keystone in the Arias approach to government, apart from his emphasis on peace, is his humanizing of government. As he said in *Costa Rica in the Year 2000,* "What we need to do in our programs is to humanize our state, humanize our economy, and humanize our culture." Years ago, Don Pepe Figueres, a mentor for Arias, crystallized this sentiment when he said, "What are tractors without violins?"

The main problem that Oscar Arias — or any progressive in Latin America — faces is that the U.S. has in the past, either by subtle or direct means, "buried them." The present obstructionist policies of the U.S., which even after the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize still threaten to undermine the Arias plan, as well as the punitive actions of the U.S. toward Costa Rica should not be surprising to those who are familiar with U.S. political involvement in Latin America during the last fifty years. The U.S. has reduced its annual aid from $175 million to $100 million; Costa Rica's sugar quota has likewise been reduced, and recently some additional tariff restrictions have been imposed; U.S. AID continues to obstruct transfers from CODESA to the cooperatives, insisting that such enterprises be sold to private management at subsidized bargain prices; the World Bank has placed far more stringent restrictions on economic policies which Costa Rica must meet to receive its current installment of a multi-million-dollar bank loan. In the past, both Democratic and Republican administrations have brought about the destabilization and sometimes destruction of such populist and democratic leaders as Roman Grau Martin in 1933, Cuba; Agosto Sandino in 1933, Nicaragua; Jorge Eliezer Gaitan in 1948, Colombia; Jacobo Guzman Arbenz in 1954, Guatemala; Roman Villeda Morales in 1963, Honduras; Juan Bosch in 1963 and again in 1965, Dominican Republic; Juan Velasco Alvarado in 1975, Peru; and Michael Manley in 1980, Jamaica: all of whom were non-Communist leaders trying to bring more social justice to their countries.

Is this then the beginning of a "destabilization process" for Oscar Arias? Will the Nobel Prize arrest this? Those of us who share the opinion of Senators Dodd (D-Conn.) and Kerry (D-Mass.) that the Nicaraguan-U.S. conflict must be settled by diplomatic, non-military means, believe that Congress must support the Arias plan and reaffirm Costa Rican neutrality, with all that implies. In the economic sphere, the U.S. must also continue to support Costa Rica with preferential tariffs, refinanced loans, and a debt moratorium which Costa Rican leaders all find indispensable. These benefits, plus self-determinism, are the requirements for a small undeveloped but clearly democratic country to remain viable and thrive.

SCREEN

OBSESSION & MEMORY

'HOUSE OF GAMES' & 'HOPE & GLORY'

David Mamet and Lindsay Crouse aren't the best known of entertainment couples; they may be the brightest. Mamet made his name with downbeat, laconic studies of American low life in such prize winning plays as *Glengarry Glen Ross* and *American Buffalo*; writing for films, he provided the ounce of depth in *The Untouchables* and the uniformly fine screenplay of *The Verdict*. In the latter, he wrote a small role for his wife as an Irish nurse last to testify at the trial; in one of the greatest "walk-ons" in film, Crouse stole the show from the lawyers (James Mason and Paul Newman), speaking in a brogue so sweet no other proof of truth was required. Since then she has appeared in literate films like *Places in the Heart* and *Alamo Bay*. In *House of Games*, her husband's first effort at direction, she stars as a troubled psychotherapist.

Mamet has matched two worlds for his film: the clean, bright office of Dr. Margeret Ford and the seedy joints where con men hang out — cool infernos of card games, pool tables,

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omnipresent smoke, and darkness visible. The film is set in Seattle, where even the streets have been shot to underline the plot; Mamet always photographs toward the border between sleek new skyscrapers and decrepit nineteenth-century townhouses next door. He must be privately horrified by the specter of urban renewal and gentrification; it would annihilate half his milieu — or rather, in his plays, his entire ambience. Mamet has always been fascinated by hucksters and tricksters, one might almost say obsessed. On one level, he simply loves their argot; on some deeper one, his writer's self identifies with their constant play with illusion and reality.

Mamet has put this obsession into Crouse, who becomes involved first through anger, then curiosity, with a con man named Mike (Joe Mategna). At the outset, the conception works brilliantly: one can feel Crouse's curiosity piqued by a profession so paradoxically close to her own, not in its goals but its subject matter — the stimulation of trust, becoming attuned to the "feel" of a person or situation, the penetration of masquerade. Crouse seems able to take care of herself as she enters the world of the cons; in one extremely good, extended poker scene, she spots a trick and saves herself from being duped. Surprises come so thick and fast afterward that a viewer gets the sickly, suspenseful intuition of an inevitable final surprise. Better still, Mamet has matched characters from two professions whose oblique speech patterns fit his gift for transcribing subverbal lingo.

The problem is what to make of all this. Crouse's character has written a book (*Driven*) about obsession and compulsion; one can believe, to a point, that even a so-called expert, in control of herself, might become enmeshed in the psychology she ostensibly deplores. But credibility problems aside, Mamet doesn't appear to have a point to make about his material. The ending is enigmatic, suggesting either morals about psychology, psychotherapists, assertiveness, self-forgiveness, or feminine anger. The strongest subtext in the film supports the last. Crouse idolizes one of her teachers, an older woman therapist; she is duped by one of her male patients, and identifies strongly with one of her female patients, a murderess. But this feminist material seems uncoordinated, as if from another movie. As a result, though rich in text and substance, *House of Games* seems slightly beside itself.

Hope and Glory ends where English screenwriter and director John Boorman's other films begin: in beautiful but perilous woodland—specifically the upper reaches of the Thames, where, as a child, he was taken during the blitz in World War Two. Boorman loves such country, although usually his film scenery is more primitive. His famous *Deliverance* (1972) was only a prelude to wilder, stranger studies of the relation of man and nature—his blood-curdling but magical version of the Arthurian myth, *Excalibur* (1981), and the Amazonian back-to-nature fable, *The Emerald Forest* (1984).

Childhood was not just a central element of plot in Boor-

CHRISTMAS

is icumen in . . .

Ever discuss *Commonweal* articles with a friend? Been asked to lend out your copy? Have a relative who would likely enjoy the magazine? Know a young professional interested in the church and current affairs, but whose reading seems limited to "strictly business"? Planning to buy a gift this year for a low-on-funds graduate student? Or for someone who's just retired and finally has time to delve into the world of general opinion? Know a budding writer who could use the reviews—or a teacher who tries to take the class beyond the news?

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man's earlier films, but an atmosphere, a feeling of new alertness to the power and beauty of nature and a desire to test the self against them. It has been Boorman's distinction to depict boyish adventure without a tinge of childishness or macho posturing; his literary parallel might be Tolkein. Despite the urban setting for most of its length, *Hope and Glory* has the same kind of appeal. By telling the story of his youth in England during the Second World War, Boorman has found an enjoyable way of placing his fascination with woodland adventure in the more everyday world.

The film begins with Boorman's nostalgic (but not always sweet) recollection of lower-middle-class London neighborhoods when Hitler's bombers first started flying over. Presenting himself as the child "Bill" (Sebastian Rice Edwards), Boorman recalls less the terror of the blitz than the excitement of it all—building a shelter in the backyard, collecting shrapnel, inspecting wreckage.

The adult world is included; Bill notes the difficulties between his parents, and his mother's (Sarah Miles) ironic relief when his father (David Hayman) enlists in the military. There is also one fine, understated, sentimental scene: his mother at the piano— her hand bandaged, her neighbors behind her listening. Sarah Miles, who used to play bad, hypermelodramatic heroines, might find her salvation as an actress in playing women of stolid endurance.

Overall, the film stays true to a child's vision. To his merit, Boorman adds no deep reflection on the progress of the war, its politics, or even other children's suffering; the most suffering Bill shows is a suspicion of pity when a child down the block loses her mother in a raid. Bill is a real (and winning) child, neither too conscious nor too good. His main goal, like that of many little boys, is to avoid getting kissed too much by older female relatives. For him, the war is a terrifying, but also humorous *rite de passage*. Beneath rubble, he learns to hear the groans of sex, not death. By steadfastly sticking to the child's view, Boorman manages the novel trick of treating the war as a comedy.

At times, Boorman goes too far, and one actor (Ian Bannen as a cute cur of a curmudgeonly grandfather) lays it on a bit thick. But director and cast manage some hilariously incongruous scenes, especially those involving a "rogue blimp" and an air raid at school, where the festive children don gas masks and recite multiplication tables through their goggles. A frequent companion in the comedy is Bill's six-year-old-sister (Geraldine Muir), who gets laughs merely with her impotent pathos. In protecting her, Bill gradually becomes morally mature by learning Boorman's favorite (very English) virtue, chivalry.

Boorman makes no special point about the film's being autobiography; there is simply an older man's narrative voice-over at the opening and closing of the film to identify it as part of someone's life story. Its appeal is universal. At the same time, the understated self-reference and the avoidance of vanity in this "portrait of the artist as young man" makes *Hope and Glory* one of the best *Bildungsromans* on film in recent memory. Some American narcissists — who never tire

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of telling us their life story in messy, tasteless, and self-important detail — could take lessons from Boorman on how to be an artist as an older man.

Bill's story is not only very relevant to Boorman's filmmaking, but to the fate of heroism in England. Once, watching a dogfight on a newsreel, Bill resists responding to sirens announcing an air raid; his mother has to drag him to shelter, saying, "They got the real thing outside." Complying, Bill complains, "But it's not the same." In truth, however, Boorman found that the war's "real thing" outdid celluloid.

Hope and Glory is another fond memoir of England's Pyrrhic victory in World War Two. But it is more; the film reveals how an Englishman is still dealing with the memory of an empire, in its outlets for heroic effort around the world. The film would be pathetic were it not for its subtle, quietly self-conscious blend of irony and poetry. TOM O'BRIEN

BOOKS

Critics' choices for Christmas

Alice E. Mayhew

ALICE E. MAYHEW *is vice-president and executive editor of Simon & Schuster, Inc.*

Since I publish books for a living, I shall refrain from praising any one of my house's offerings, except I shall fall off the wagon to praise one by Daniel Callahan, a former editor of *Commonweal, Setting Limits* (Simon and Schuster, $18.95, 256 pp.). It is one of the most important books of the year (disinterested critics have agreed unanimously). It asks for a more rational expenditure of the nation's health resources. It questions not only whether a society should spend disproportionate money and effort to prolong the lives of the grievously ill aged, but whether we have lost our understanding of what is a normal life span to the illusions of technological immortality.

And Wilfrid Sheed, a former editor and drama critic of *Commonweal*, offers one of the wickedest novels of the year: *The Boys of Winter* (Alfred A. Knopf, $16.95, 280 pp.), a biting and funny satire about, yes, book publishers, action packed and delivered in what the reviewer in *The New York Times Book Review*, in no uncertain terms, called Mr. Sheed's "impeccable comic voice."

And Calvin Trillin, who doesn't know how not to be funny about important matters, has collected some of his *Nation* pieces: *If You Can't Say Something Nice* (Ticknor and Fields, $16.95, 212 pp.). When he wrote regularly for that redoubtable journal, complaining in its pages about the cheapness of its editor, Victor S. Navasky, Mr. Trillin offered much hilarity and some practical suggestions, including one for a campaign slogan to fit any season: "Never Been Indicted."

Robert Hughes's *The Fatal Shore* (Alfred A. Knopf, $24.95, 688 pp.) is a tremendous work that recounts the convict origins of his native Australia, the far-away country, the "fatal shore" to which they, many of them petty thieves, were condemned. Except for the black Africans shipped as slaves (and this is a big exception), those who colonized the American continent arrived by choice, even if many of those choices were hard choices, indeed. Dramatizing the despairing origins of his own country, Mr. Hughes has added to modern historical achievement.

It isn't true that publishers have no friends. I imagine Mrs. Margaret Thatcher will find something nice in her Christmas stocking from the proprietors of Viking-Penguin. By banning publication of Peter Wright and Paul Greengrass's *Spycatcher* (Viking, $19.95, 391 pp.) in England, she helped create an international bestseller, and filled the coffers of the kiosks in all the airports serving Heathrow where customers purchased armloads of this volume to take to England where many wondered, with reason, what all the fuss was about.

Best Intentions, by Robert Sam Anson (Random House, $17.95, 221 pp.), is about a black youth who had just graduated from an exclusive New England prep school and was on his way to Stanford University, when he was shot and killed by a plainclothes cop, apparently in self-defense, in the midst of an attempted robbery. Anson's detective work bridges the Harlem ghetto and the New Hampshire countryside where Philips Exeter Academy is located, and his fine book dramatizes a wound in our society, and brings Edmund Perry to life in our own deepened consciences.

David Ignatius's *Agents of Innocence* (Norton, $17,95, 444 pp.) is a very good novel. It is a tense, complex, and sympathetic story, set in the Middle East, which the author once covered for *The Wall Street Journal*. The plot revolves around a decent C.I.A. agent who tries to buy some peace in the middle of that shooting gallery, and fails. But, to Mr. Ignatius's great credit, this man, afflicted by the proverbial American innocence, is in no sense the ugly American.

Last, but first, it is time to cease referring to Toni Morrison as a great *black* writer or a fine *woman* writer, though she is both. She is one of our best, period. Read *Beloved* (Alfred A. Knopf,

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$18.95, 275 pp.). Read all of Ms. Morrison's magnificent novels.

Robert Lekachman

ROBERT LEKACHMAN *teaches economics at the Lehman College campus of the City University of New York. His current book is* Visions and Nightmares: America after Reagan *(Macmillan).*

In this year of strange and wonderful events — the Ollie North extravaganza, the failed attempt to convert Robert Bork into a raging moderate, and Gorbachev's provision of a sorely needed photo opportunity for our floundering president, it is possibly appropriate that the books that instructed, entertained, or moved me were all political.

Garry Wills's *Reagan's America: Innocents at Home* (Doubleday, $19.95, 472 pp.) is less successful than his *Nixon Agonistes*, but like everything Wills writes it is crammed with fresh material, even compelling evidence that the young Reagan actually did work hard as a lifeguard and later as a union leader. Wills's thesis that Reagan is to be understood through the lens of Hollywood is plausible but less than convincing. Still, it is creepy to realize that the man's Star Wars obsession may very well stem from his World War II role as Brass Bancroft, secret agent, charged with protecting our intertia projector, a weapon capable of shooting enemy planes out of the sky, from Nazi spies. For sure a primitive laser.

Stephen E. Ambrose's *Nixon: the Education of a Politician, 1913-1962* (Simon & Schuster, $22.95, 752 pp.) is something of a tour de force. Ambrose comes closer to turning Nixon into a normal human being than I would have believed possible. A notably fair writer, Ambrose reviews Nixon's notorious early campaigns against Jerry Voorhees and Helen Gahagan Douglas and concludes that particularly in the Douglas race, Nixon was not the only one guilty of mudslinging. No admirer of his subject, Ambrose highlights several occasions when Nixon behaved in principled fashion.

For sheer fun, Tip O'Neill's *A Man of the House* (Random House, $19.95, 387 pp.) is the book of the dreary Reagan era. It is crammed with wonderful stories, candid personal judgments, and unabashed nostalgia for old-time Boston politics. It should be read as an unsolemn eulogy of the great Democratic tradition of FDR, Jack Kennedy, and LBJ, certainly not as guidance to the blow-dried, media-obsessed candidates who flit before us.

Finally, Gerald Seymour's *A Song in Morning* (Norton, $16.95, 364 pp.), a political thriller set in South Africa, which transcends its form. Seymour, whose specialty seems to be mournful accounts of intractable animosities in places like Belfast, here evokes the claustrophobic atmosphere of apartheid in a parable of personal loyalty to misguided masters by a British spy, entangled in a failed African National Congress action.

Eleanor Munro

ELEANOR MUNRO *is an art historian and critic. Her book* On Glory Roads: A Pilgrim's Book About Pilgrimages *(Thames & Hudson) came out this past spring, and her* Memoir of a Modernist's Daughter *(Viking) will appear in March.*

Call this the New Age or the Age of Ecology or what you will, it's apparent many people have a new interest in the way human life unfolds in the matrix of the natural world. Put just that way, the idea may not seem so new. Didn't scientists, writers, and artists of the past also study individuals against their background? The difference is subtle but real. Today many workers in psychology and the arts — especially writers of personal memoirs — ignore the boundary that once clearly separated the subjective mode from the objective. They are exploring the mystery of consciousness, which reveals itself in the same arching process by which it affirms its connection with outer reality.

Annie Dillard, in her new book *An American Childhood* (Harper & Row, $17.95, 255 pp.), focuses on this issue with the precision of a burning glass. She wants to remember and record the "heart-stopping transition" when consciousness lifted out of the waking-dream of infancy. The writer recalls and, in the same exulting instant, turns the light on herself as a knowing adult. There's a straight narrative in this book as well, swift-paced and vivid as all Dillard's work is. But it's that anguish of self-search that struck me particularly: "How much noticing could I permit myself? . . . too much and I was too self-conscious to live . . . too little . . . and I would miss the whole show. I would wake on my deathbed and say, What was that?"

Two books published in the sixties but reissued this year in paperback with new forwords offer psychological case histories of a related nature from the annals of Soviet psychologist A. R. Luria (*The Mind of a Mnemonist*, foreword by Jerome S. Bruner, $7.95 paper, 160 pp., and *The Man with a Shattered World*, forword by Oliver Sacks, $7.95, 165 pp; both Harvard University Press). Sacks, also author of *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*, makes the point: "a human life is not a life until it is examined; it is not a life until it is truly remembered and appropriated; and such a remembrance is not something passive but active . . . the creative construction of one's life." In Luria's cases, one patient is cursed with such an open switchboard of brain-lines he's inundated with data, as helpless as the patient in the second case, a victim of organic brain-injury. Neither can survive in the world without special care because memory, the essential tool of self-formation, is defective.

Joan Colebrook's *A House of Trees* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $18.95, 256 pp.) is flooded with examined nostalgia for her childhood in the Australian rainforest. There is no single moment of epiphany in this beautiful appropriation of a landscape and a pioneer people, rather a gradual coming-to-awareness of herself apart from her background "condition of isolation and intellectual loneliness." In the end, sailing for America

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and a writer's career (she is also the author of the unsung masterpiece of social reporting, *The Cross of Lassitude*) she muses, "the water bore me away. The water was history." Water is also memory, in which we float in time.

Bruce Chatwin's *The Songlines* (Viking, $18.95, 293 pp.) conjures up exactly the double-world I spoke of before. The Australian outback where he also journeys is an "objective" landscape of sand, rock, trees, and gulleys. But it is criss-crossed with subjective "songlines" or "dreaming-tracks," treks by the ancestors and creator-gods of the aboriginal people of the region, projected outwards by the living to maintain the old ones in memory and, simultaneously, to vitalize the earth. Extended globally, such a dual process of conceiving and appropriating might truly give birth to the living brain-in-space of which "Gaia" scientist James Lovelock, and others, speak.

Stanley Hauerwas

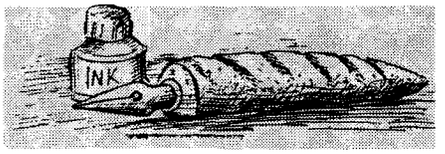
STANLEY HAUERWAS *is professor of theological ethics at Duke University. His book* Christian Existence Today: Essays on Church, World, and Living in Between *(Lambert Publications) is forthcoming.*

Alasdair MacIntyre has done it again. Soon to be published in the new year, his book *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, $22.95, 432 pp.) cannot help but be the most discussed book for the next decade. Here MacIntyre delivers on his promise in *After Virtue* to develop an account of rationality and justice that is tradition specific. It is a long and complex book, but will repay any reader's labors. In this book MacIntyre tells the story of four traditions: the Aristotelian, the Augustinian, the Scottish, and the rise of the liberal tradition. His narrative shows the interaction of these in a manner that illumines our current intellectual and moral context.

What is so remarkable about MacIntyre's achievement is his ability to combine close historical analysis with philosophical argumentation while never losing his narrative line. This book makes clear that the often-made charge that MacIntyre cannot avoid relativism is deeply flawed. With great power, MacIntyre shows that that charge reflects the liberal account of rationality which itself is deeply flawed. While MacIntyre does not pretend to solve the social and political challenges confronting us, indeed he makes it clear why there is no solution. His analysis illumines our situation in an extraordinary manner.

For those inclined to believe that the liberal tradition still has great viability, there will be no better book to read than Jeffrey Stout's *Ethics After Babel* (Beacon Press, $22.95, 300 pp.). I read this book, like MacIntyre's, in manuscript, though both are soon to appear in print. Stout provides a non-foundationalist defense of liberalism as a tradition. The modesty of his account of liberalism as well as the modesty of his defense are commendable. While I remain unconvinced that his account of liberalism as a political ethic is compatible with current economic realities, we are in his debt for making the case so clearly. This book, along with Stout's earlier *Flight From Authority* (Notre Dame, 1981) establishes him as one of our most sensitive and nuanced thinkers in modern religious thought.

Though Martha Nussbaum's *The Fragility of Goodness* (Cambridge University, $59.50, $19.95 paper, 544 pp.) may seem an odd book to couple with those of MacIntyre and Stout, I believe it to be part of the same conversation. Nussbaum's book is a wonderful discussion of the Greek dramatists' understanding of the fragile and tragic character of life, Plato's attempt to secure moral goodness from tragedy, and finally Aristotle's reclaiming of the dramatists' vision. Like MacIntyre's and Stout's books, Nussbaum's book is filled with insight and close analysis of philosophical text. Taken together they represent a new day in philosophical ethics. No more can theologians say that philosophers are simply not dealing with issues of substance. Here we have books that probe



the most profound moral issues in a manner at once compelling and scholarly. These books not only are meant to make us think differently, they each exhibit a moral passion to help us live better.

The books above might all be described as philosophical. However, each in its own way breaks through the sterile disciplinary divisions that enthrall contemporary intellectual life. I find myself increasingly attracted to thinkers who simply refuse to be pigeon-holed by their disciplines. Another book that fits that mode, though not as philosophical as the above, is Jean Bethke Elshtain's *Women and War* (Basic Books, $19.95, 288 pp). Elshtain's intention is to provide an alternative to the structure of traditional war stories with their movement from brave and fearful beginnings to triumphant or tragic endings by combining a historical and philosophical analysis. Elshtain achieves her purpose in an extraordinary manner, combining historical and philosophical analysis to help us see the peculiar character of modern warfare. Indeed, she shows us that war is as much a matter of the imagination as it is of power politics. Her book challenges us to consider what it would mean to have imagination, especially in the light of modern nation-states which are built on the presumption of the inevitability of war, capable of making war serve political ends.

It is perhaps an indication of the times that all the books I have mentioned to this point are only tangentially theological. However, I believe each of them has extraordinary importance for those of us working in the theological vineyards. There have been, however, several outstanding books in philosophical theology and theological ethics that I should like to mention. Janet Martin Soskice's *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Clarendon/Oxford, $16.95, 200 pp.) is an extraordinary account of the metaphorical character of religious language. Of particular importance is how metaphor, rather than being a way to

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avoid truth claims, is shown to be essential to understanding the kind of realism that should be characteristic of Christian theological convictions. In that respect her book is a nice complement to the analysis provided by MacIntyre.

Also of note is James McClendon's *Systematic Theology: Ethics Vol. I* (Abingdon Press, $22.95, 353 pp.). McClendon's book hopefully will set a new standard for works done in Christian ethics. It is not only the best book we have for introducing people to the discipline of Christian ethics, but it is done in such an imaginative manner it offers fresh potential for thinking how best to do Christian ethics today.

I want to recommend two books that at first seem completely different from the books recommended above. The first is by Gerhard Lohfink, *Jesus and the Community* (Fortress Press, $9.95, 211 pp.). Lohfink in this book reclaims for New Testament studies the importance of community and, in particular, the figure of Jesus. As a result, he supplies exactly the imaginative resources of the New Testament for thinking about our current religious situation as well as the problem of war.

In that respect, however, I cannot refrain from commending Paul Ramsey's *Speak Up for Just War and Pacifism* (Pennsylvania State University, $24.95, $12.95 paper, 240 pp.) which will soon be published. This is Ramsey's critique of the Methodist bishops' pastoral, and in it he shows the extraordinary resources of the just war tradition for forcing us to confront imaginatively the moral problems of war. I hesitate to mention Ramsey's book as it also contains an epilogue by me — an epilogue that provides a pacifist critique of the Methodist bishops' pastoral. I believe, however, that what Ramsey has done in this book is the culmination of an extraordinary career in helping us think about these matters, and it should not be missed by anyone.

In conclusion, I find myself extremely hopeful about our current intellectual situation. The books mentioned above set an agenda for theological engagement that I hope will make it as fruitful as it is exciting. We are in these authors' debt.

David Burns

DAVID BURNS *is project director for the American Association for the Advancement of Science.*

If you want a clear explanation, go for the best. The best scientists are most likely to use plain English. A resort to jargon is almost always a give-away that someone is in over his head. The best have the deepest understanding; they have the most confidence about what they know. They are usually good teachers and writers.

Philip Morrison's infectious curiosity and delight in discovery have made him a legend at M.I.T. *In The Ring of Truth: An Inquiry into How We Know What We Know* (Random House, $24.95, 307 pp.) he collaborates with his wife Phylis. The book, published in connection with the PBS series, emphasizes methods. They begin, as does all science, with observation. They show the impact of Galileo's "Dutch" telescope in Venice. A Rube

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Goldberg machine of firecrackers, popcorn, and candles demonstrates the conservation of matter. The menu of a Tour de France bike rider shows energy flows (a kilowatt-hour of electricity equals 3.6 "JD" — jelly doughnuts). A plane table on the lawn at Monticello and "the van of Eratosthenes" (a yellow rent-a-truck) show how we learned to map and measure. The Morrisons show how deep-sea sediments can reconstruct "the Great Falls of Gibraltar," perhaps a thousand feet high, as the Atlantic ocean roared back into "the Mediterranean desert." They use gold leaf, oil slicks, and table salt — and a little help from Julia Child, "a celebrated applied biochemist" — to reveal atomic structure.

The Life It Brings: One Physicist's Beginnings (Ticknor & Fields, $16.95, 171 pp.) is Jeremy Bernstein's autobiographical memoir of his improbable entry into theoretical physics. He entertains with anecdotes of his first thirty-plus years, including his friendship with members of the Duke Ellington orchestra. He also gives us insightful sketches of his mentors and colleagues — Oppenheimer, Schwinger, Dyson, Gell-Mann, Yang and Lee, and others at Princeton's Institute for Advanced Study. His style is sophisticated and seamless, enlivened with urbane humor. His introspections show that his becoming a physicist was inevitable — a surprise only to himself.

Stephen Jay Gould has attained popular acclaim by writing well about what he knows best — paleontology and evolutionary theory. In *Time's Arrow, Time's Cycle: Myth and Metaphor in the Discovery of Geological Time* (Harvard, $17.50, 240 pp.), he revisits the period 1680-1840 when geology first conflicted with biblical accounts of Creation and Noah and the Flood. This is a rich intellectual history of the concept of "deep time" and the effort to reconcile physical evidence with theological images.

James Gleick is a writer (for the *New York Times*), not a scientist, but he has the essential qualities of understanding and confidence. In *Chaos: Making a New Science* (Viking, $19.95, 352 pp.), he presents startling new ideas in a highly readable manner.

Gleick's discussion of complex mathematics can be grasped even by those who failed calculus. The new "science of chaos" may reveal the deep structures embedded in phenomena hitherto viewed as completely random. Computer graphics show the complexities that arise from simple formulas and models, if repeated with nonlinearity and feedback. They display the deterministic patterns buried within virtually all data. We see the spontaneous emergence of self-organization.

Computers make possible "trial-and-error geometry." With a home computer and a simple program (which the book provides) you can create your own fractal patterns — snowflakes, lightning, and complex colors and shapes. The screen paints stable lines breaking and branching. Then, emerging from the chaos, astonishing geometric regularity.

These new models of nonlinear systems suggest a constant beating together of order and chaos — "creating disorder in one direction while remaining trim and methodical in another . . . chaotic along one axis and orderly along another." Gleick suggests that "chaos" may even help reconcile free will with determinism. Just like the computer graphics of cellular automata or the deep structures of Mandelbrot sets, "The system is deterministic, but you can't say what it's going to do next."

Melinda Wortz

MELINDA WORTZ *is director of the Fine Arts Gallery, University of California, Irvine, and a regular contributor to* Arts *magazine,* Artnews, *and* Artform. *She has prepared many exhibition catalogues, including the introductions for the James Turrell exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Larry Bell exhibition at the Hudson River Museum.*

In *Working Space* (Harvard, $30, $14.95 paper, 196 pp.) Frank Stella takes his place among artists whose critical theorizing is as significant as their sustained practice. He is consciously participating in what he considers to be the crisis facing abstract art today. A fundamental theme underlying Stella's extensive and selective analysis of art history is the relationship between abstract imagery — particularly spatial expansion — and religious feeling. As he states,

> By 1970 abstract painting had lost its ability to create space. In a series of withdrawals, it began to illustrate the space it had once been able to create. This fulfilled one of the modernism's great dreams: the space in painting became available to eyesight alone, but unfortunately not to eyesight in a pictorial sense, but to eyesight in a literary sense. What we are left with is illustrated space which we read; what we have lost is created space which we could feel. Put simply, the pictorial space of abstraction has acquired artificiality at the expense of reality.

Thus Stella reveals his interest in the quality of felt presence, specifically the feeling of expansive pictorial space. This issue is of great interest today, particularly in the writings of French philosophers such as Jean FranÇois Lyotard, who argues eloquently that the non-verbal and non-narrative felt presence of a work of art is its real content. On this topic Stella quotes Berenson,

> Space-composition is the art which humanizes the void, making of it an enclosed Eden, a domed mansion wherein our higher selves at last find an abode.

Stella elaborates his arguments in a lucid and often dramatic prose style, beginning with a thorough discussion of Caravaggio's contribution to the development of expansive pictorial space, and continuing his analysis with reference to Raphael, Rubens, the Caracci, and other Renaissance and Baroque masters. In this effort he contributes original insights to the artists he explores.

In the later chapters of the book Stella presents his critique of modern and contemporary abstraction. His insight into the art of his own time is especially remarkable since he was early on a proponent of flatness, as articulated in his famous statement that in his paintings "what you see is what you get." Finally,

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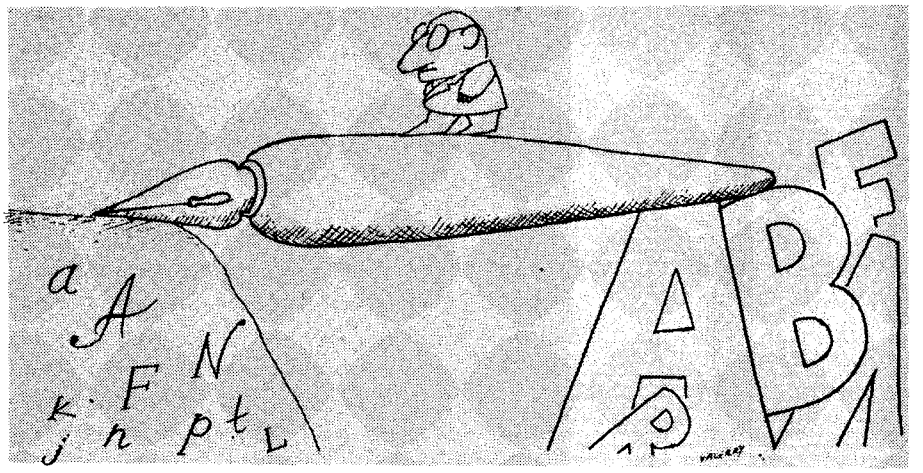

his discussion of his own work reveals his working process and illuminates the imagery of his newest relief paintings currently on view at The Museum of Modern Art.

Pacific Shift by William Irwin Thompson, Sierra Club, $15.95, 197 pp. & appendix.

A "New Age" advocate since the 1960s, and a founder of the Lindesfarne Association in the 1970s, Thompson argues that the hero worshipping of individuals, whether rock stars, sports heroes, movie stars, gurus, or television evangelists, is no longer appropriate. The planet needs an inclusivist mentality in order to survive.

It is clear to Thompson that our own era is courting chaos and death. Thompson uses numerous examples of contemporary leaders to underscore his thesis: that what the world must adapt is an ecological model for politics and human affairs. He points out how Reagan's mode of rugged individualism, in both the national and the planetary arenas, fosters competition and hostility, while his personal style cultivates the image, the actor in place of substance. He discusses the perspectives of composer Karlheinz Stockhausen, novelist Doris Lessing, and film maker Peter Weir as examples of artists who provide inclusive and ecological points of view. He also invokes the insights of Gregory Bateson and the Nishitani School of Zen Buddhism, both of which reflect an ecological perspective. Finally, the author sees the new technological age as inherently democratic and global, since people throughout the world can have access to the new modes of communication. And he predicts that the necessary global perspective, which includes outer space as well as our own planet, will develop from the West Coast of the United States and the Pacific Rim countries.

Art as Religious Studies, edited by Doug Adams and Diane Apostolos Cappadona, Crossroad, $17.95, 247 pp.

The editors chose writers for this project who understand the discipline of *seeing*, not just analytic and language-based methods of learning. Although essentially didactic in intent, each of the fourteen essays included in this volume is lively and inspiring, making the book an invaluable resource for teachers, whether in seminaries or universities, who want to integrate visual art into their teaching of courses on religion. For those to whom the use of visual materials in religion courses is new, the book's introductory essay by Jane Dillenberger provides a great deal of practical information regarding the presentation of slides, the development of visual resources such as mounted reproductions, and trips to local museums.

Margaret R. Miles's contribution, "Nudity, Gender, and Religious Meaning in the Italian Renaissance," presents a discussion and rejoinder to Leo Steinberg's *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and Modern Oblivion*. The debates surrounding these issues have been among the most heated in contemporary art criticism and feminist theory.

The final section of the book, entitled "Visual Arts in Religious Praxis" brings the discussions directly into contemporary culture through essays on "Art and Social Justice," by Jake Empereur; "Classical Paintings in the Teaching of Pastoral Care," by Archie Smith, Jr. Doug Adams's kinesthetic approach to George Segal's Holocaust Monument in San Francisco; and George Goethals's discussion of "Images and Values: Television as Religious Communications."

This volume is rich fare, offering scholarship, theory, and practice in an admirably pluralistic and ecumenical selection.

AIDS, The Lapis Press, 1850 Union Street, Suite 466, San Francisco, California, 94123, $5.95, 52 pp.

This book is illustrated in full color by the prominent French artist Niki de Saint Phalle, who is known for her exuberant, colorful, playful, joyous, irresistible style. The device of the text is a letter written by a mother to her son, with the intention of informing him of the facts of the AIDS virus, the means of preventing exposure, and the importance of showing love and compassion to its victims. The latest medical and scientific findings were provided by immunologist Dr. Baradudin; Dr. William Hazeltine, Harvard Medical School; Dr. Paul Volberding, University of California; and Dr. Jordan Gutterman, the University of Texas. Incredibly, this book manages to be straightforward and factual, and charming at the same time.

Joel Conarroe

JOEL CONARROE *is president of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. He has written books and articles about American literature and serves on the boards of Pen, Yaddo, and the National Book Critics' Circle.*

The finest book I have read this year (or, for that matter, this decade) is Philip Roth's *The Counterlife* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $18.95, 324 pp.), a challenging narrative that ranges over a number of beautifully

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evoked locales and examines a number of timely (and timeless) subjects. Roth's method of presenting complex issues from opposing points of view, all persuasively articulated, is nothing short of astonishing. This novel makes it clear that in addition to being our most intelligent writer (though Bellowites may object to my saying so), he is also our most consistently satisfying stylist (and here the Updikians may register a protest). Readers not yet conversant with the wonders of this book need not take my word for its quality — no novel in recent memory has been praised by so many discriminating critics, a list that includes, among others, Julian Barnes, Robert Alter, Edward Said, Martin Amis, Cynthia Ozick, David Lehman, Richard Locke, William Gass, Mark Feeney, and Paul Gray.

I am also impressed by several recent poetry collections, and single out three for special mention. Like her earlier books *(The Kingfisher* and *What the Light Was Like)* Amy Clampitt's *Archaic Figure* (Alfred A. Knopf, $8.95 paper, 113 pp.) is richly textured, sensuous, and filled with resonant echoes of Hopkins, Keats, Moore, and her other poetic idols. There are those who find her compressed diction suffocating — a bit too tea-cozy cozy — but I find it evocative, especially when read aloud. Amy Clampitt's ear is one of the glories of our not altogether glorious poetic era.

M. L. Rosenthal also has a fine ear, as one would expect in one of our more eloquent critics, and in *As For Love* (Oxford $11.95 paper, 54 pp.) he has produced his strongest collection of poems to date, a winning mélange of wit, wisdom, playfulness, and fine-tuned lyricism. His voice is utterly distinctive — if you came across one of these poems in the middle of the Sahara you would know immediately that it is a Rosenthal. I especially admire "The Ballad of the Sad Dybbuk," which makes me, and everyone I've shown it to, laugh out loud.

A very different but no less admirable sensibility informs Wendell Berry's *Sabbaths* (North Point, $6.95 paper, 98 pp.), a sequence of deeply-felt meditations composed in accessible, rhythm-and-rhyme stanzas. For those who live in cities, these quiet, rural lyrics will provide refreshment for the soul. Because this work is so much of a piece, I can suggest its special quality by quoting some representative lines:

> When field and woods agree, they make a rhyme
> That stirs in distant memory the whole
> First Sabbath's song that no largess of time
> Or hope or sorrow wholly can recall.'
>
> But harmony of earth is Heaven-made,
> Heaven-making, is promise and is prayer,
> A little song to keep us unafraid,
> An earthly music magnified in air.

Richard Wightman Fox

RICHARD WIGHTMAN FOX *is the author of* Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography *(Harper & Row paperback), and is working on a study of Protestant religion in modern American culture.*

In tackling two centuries of New York intellect — artists as well as writers and thinkers — Thomas Bender has embraced the old-fashioned goal of producing synthetic history for a broad audience. *New York Intellect: A History of Intellectual Life in New York City, from 1750 to the Beginnings of Our Own Time* (Alfred A. Knopf, $25, 422 pp.) is a history of public culture and a quest to revitalize today's public culture by exposing and nourishing its roots.

Bender has grounded ideas and arts in their evolving cosmopolitan context. But in this work, urban community is not just background setting. Community is itself the fruit of a vibrant life of mind and senses. Community is a conversation, one that he feels can attain special excellence in the metropolis. He wants his own book to be part of the dialogue.

Bender is not sure whether New York, with its rich tradition of cultural diversity and achievement, can still support a lively civic culture. In the last half-century, in his view, literary work has atrophied. But whatever the prospects for cosmopolitanism, Bender has illuminated a long-standing civic ideal and reminded his fellow historians that there are broad publics to be studied historically and addressed today.

Women's history has evolved and deepened over the last decade, focusing less on female victimization and more on the social construction of gender. Nancy F. Cott's new book, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism* (Yale University, $29.95, 372 pp.), is a fine contribution because it takes seriously the social construction of "feminism" itself. It frankly confronts the splits that have marked feminist discourse over the last half-century: splits that are built into feminism, that ironically give it its power and threaten to fragment it.

Feminism is both a theory about equality, she writes, and a theory about sexual difference. Women must see themselves as individuals, with the same capacities and opportunities as men. But maintaining that perception depends upon a female social network — a network that is undermined by too much individualism.

Cott argues that the 1920s were not a time of post-suffrage decline in women's fortunes — the usual historical judgment — but a time when modern feminism, with all its inner contradictions, took shape. This is a book that will reorient future discussions of women's past.

Ellen W. Schrecker is the first scholar in the last quarter-century to look in depth at McCarthyism in education (*No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities,* Oxford University, $20.95, 437 pp.). She secured 150 interviews with the principals, who provide the stories at the heart of the book. The result is oral history at its best: tireless taping combined with creative "scrounging" (Schrecker's word) for documentary sources.

It is the dismal tale that one expects. Institutions supposedly devoted to the life of the mind capitulated with frightening ease to the pressures of congressional scrutiny. Hundreds of professors were examined by the committees, and most

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were then disciplined by their own colleges — not for having been Communists or radicals, but for failing to cooperate fully with Congress or with the universities' own faculty or trustee investigators. Everywhere but at Reed College faculties supported political tests as a condition of employment. Yet at Reed, as elsewhere, any professor who refused to answer questions about left-wing ties could expect to be fired by the trustees.

Communists, it was argued, had surrendered the protections of academic freedom because they had embraced a conspiracy that required their unquestioning obedience. ("Heresy, yes, conspiracy, no," as Sidney Hook put it.) And professors, it was argued further, had an even greater moral obligation than the ordinary citizen to reveal whether or not they had embraced such a conspiracy: they had the independence of the academy to protect. That was the final irony. In a supposed effort to protect their autonomy, universities kicked out those professors who insisted on shielding themselves (and their colleges) from political truth squads.

Pheme Perkins

PHEME PERKINS *is professor of theology at Boston College. She is the author of numerous books on the New Testament including* The Resurrection *(Doubleday).* Reading the New Testament *(Paulist, second edition) is forthcoming. She also serves on the editorial boards of the* Journal of Biblical Literature *and the* Catholic Biblical Quarterly.

The past year has brought a banner crop of books whose minute attention to historical details opens up the worlds in which Christianity was born, shaped, and reshaped. In each of these books, leading archaeologists, exegetes, and historians provide new insights and extensively documented resources. The general reader may enjoy the pleasure of learning about little-known worlds. The student and scholar cannot continue to work in the history of Christianity without careful attention to these books.

The New Testament in Its Literary Environment, David E. Aune, Westminster, $22.94, 260 pp.

David Aune situates the writings of the New Testament within the literary traditions of their time. He pays as careful attention to the development of genre, forms, and content in Jewish writing as he does to the Greco-Roman authors. Aune also follows the genres of gospel, epistle, and apocalypse beyond the New Testament into other early Christian writing. Clarity, accuracy, and excellent bibliographical summaries make this a must for work in classics, Jewish studies, and Christian origins.

Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women, by Carolyn Walker Bynum, University of California, $29.95, 444 pp.

As she has done so often, Carolyn Bynum insists upon accurate rendering of the details of women's and men's experience. Her study of the role of food,

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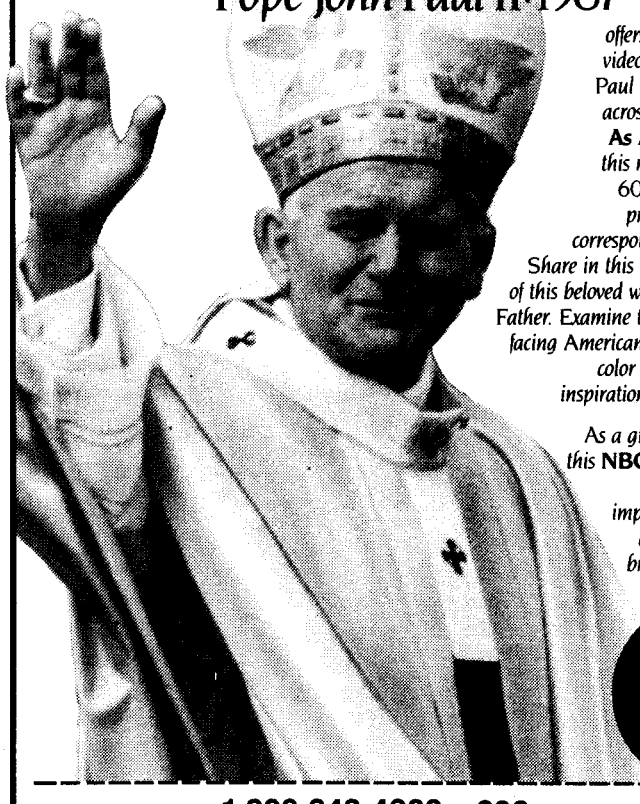

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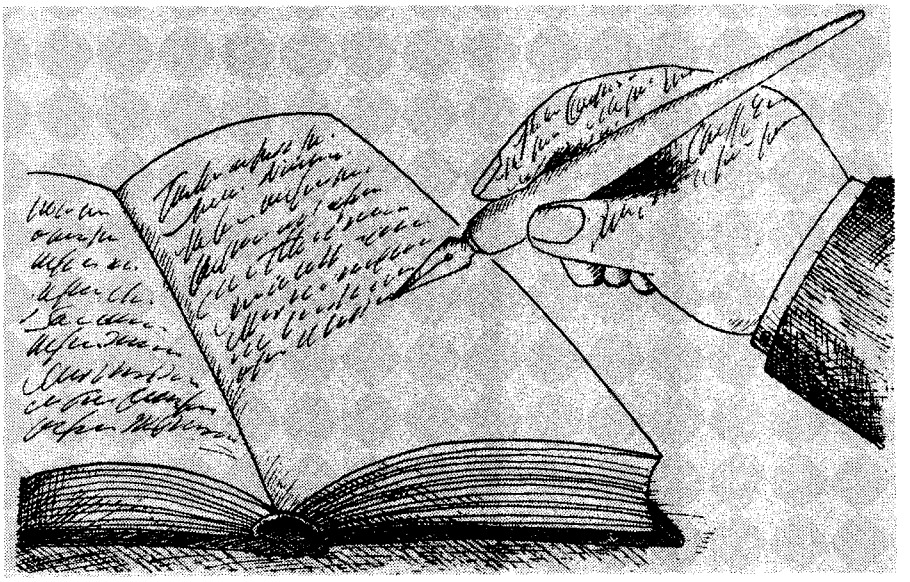

both in practices of fasting and distributing food, shows that there are distinctive patterns of religious experience and expression among women. Their lives are not marked by crisis and conversion but by the sense of continuous development. They experience the suffering of Jesus as an identification with their own bodily experience.

Pagans and Christians, by Robin Lane Fox, Alfred A. Knopf, $35, 799 pp.

Lane Fox's careful study of the transition from pagan to Christian in the ancient world demonstrates the ongoing vitality of "Pagan" religious forms which the clichés of church historians had reduced to insignificance. We see how epiphany and oracular prophecy find new expressions in Christian garb.

A History of Private Life: From Pagan Rome to Byzantium, ed. by Paul Veyne, Belknap/Harvard, $29.50, 670 pp.

A History of Private Life makes an excellent companion piece to Lane Fox. Not only do leading authorities describe the personal, family, social, religious, economic, and architectural living spaces of people in these times, the volume is rightly illustrated with a wealth of photographs of archaeological objects and decorative arts to illustrate what is described in the text.

The Harper's Atlas of the Bible, ed. by James B. Pritchard, Harper & Row, $49.95, 254 pp.

Finally, Harper & Row has brought us a wonderful new Bible Atlas (*The Times Atlas of the Bible* in Great Britain). It too contains detailed and informative historical articles along with a wealth of illustrations of archeological finds, plans of sites and buildings, and artists' reconstructions. Of the five, *A History of Private Life* is the best overall value, but these are all lasting additions to one's library.

Robert C. Neville

ROBERT C. NEVILLE *is professor of religion, philosophy, and theology at Boston University. His most recent book is* The Puritan Smile: A Look Toward Moral Reflection *(State University of New York Press).*

The deep freeze in which the American philosophic spirit has been laid away for so many years has been opened up, and the recent thaw has unleashed creative energies in several directions. By this I do not mean Richard Rorty's neo-pragmatic chorus singing the finale of the philosophic tradition. On the contrary, in interesting ways, each of the books mentioned below is paleo-pragmatic, American in the rich speculative, hermeneutical, and critical senses associated with Charles Peirce.

The most unusual, daring, and soon-to-be-controversial is David L. Hall and Roger T. Ames's *Thinking Through Confucius* (State University of New York, $14.95, 393 pp.). Its title is intentionally ambiguous. On the one hand, as comparative philosophy, it describes a thoroughgoing reinterpretation of the thought of Confucius, working to free it from the encrustations of later Confucians. This involves a new, philosophically informed translation of many of the key Confucian terms. Even more, it involves a philosophic interpretation of the differences between Confucius's thought and the Western tradition that must be bridged in order to make a translation in the first place; the key idea is that Western philosophies presuppose some kind of transcendent normative principle, whereas all principles for Confucius are wholly immanent. On the other hand, *Thinking Through Confucius* means thinking by means of Confucius: Hall and Ames advocate the fundamental truth and contemporary relevance of central Confucian ideas.

The Confucian critique of Western culture implicit in Hall and Ames is remarkably similar to David Kolb's *The Critique of Pure Modernity: Hegel, Heidegger, and After* (University of Chicago, $25, 316 pp.). Kolb's is a work of academic criticism but with a powerful conclusion made all the more powerful by the fine grain of his analysis of Hegel and Heidegger, the two great "definers" of modernity. Briefly, Hegel understood modernity through a dialectic of totalizing continuities; Heidegger was equally totalizing in his call for an end to modernity. Kolb argues: "Both cumulation and discontinuity are too holistic to describe our situation. The truth of post-modern culture is that things are too multiple and uncoordinated to be genuinely post anything."

David Weissman makes a far more thoroughgoing critique of Western culture's philosophic assumptions in *Intuition and Ideality* (State University of New York, $14.95, 308 pp.). There has been a pervasive, though not universal, assumption that to be is to be the kind of thing that is the object of vision or intuition. From Plato through Descartes to

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Husserl, Whitehead, and even the "realistic" analytic philosophy of science, the "object of mental vision" model has been assumed, to the exclusion of more realistic assumptions about what things are and how they can be known. This book heralds a forthcoming systematic presentation of a metaphysical alternative.

David Tracy's *Plurality and Ambiguity: Hermeneutics, Religion, Hope* (Harper and Row, $15.95, 148 pp.) assumes the results of arguments such as developed in the other books and directs its analysis to religion. Hermeneutics can be neither explanation nor univocal argument; language is not a tool humans use but a matrix that creates and sometimes uses humans; history is not a divine or any other kind of story, but a fundamentally ambiguous collection of stories, or story parts. Religion is thus left to provide hope in the face of multivalence of meaning and lack of authority.

That's the extraordinary thing about these four books. They stand beyond the orientation points that are supposed to define the philosophic task, and yet they not only have hope but are proceeding confidently in new substantive directions. Perhaps it helps if one's name is David. Right? Roger!

Carlin Romano

CARLIN ROMANO *is book editor of the* Philadelphia Inquirer.

In a just world, editors of book review sections would name their favorites *passages* in 1987 books, not their favorite 1987 books. Thousands of books arrive each year, but only eighty or ninety receive the page-by-page treatment we're willing to call "reading a book" when someone asks that cruelest of professional questions: "Have you read . . .?"

Several hundred, though, get read for twenty to fifty pages or more. The books that matter to me excel in *stickiness* — they refuse to go away, whether I gave them the short form or the long form. Some I hope to finish. Others I did finish, even if they're still not finished with me.

In fiction, parts of Saul Bellow's *More Die of Heartbreak* (William Morrow, $17.95, 335 pp.) reappear on the inner screen every time (which is frequently) I read a novelist who can't combine fun and insight in the same line. *The Propheteers* (Harper & Row, $16.95, $7.95 paper, 288 pp.) by Max Apple took Howard Johnson and other myths of American pop culture and whipped them into literature. I still marvel at Steve Stern's ability to juice up American Jewish fiction by trucking it down to Memphis in *Lazar Malkin Enters Heaven* (Viking, $16.95, 249 pp.).

One novel that did not draw widespread praise, Robert Inman's *Home Fires Burning* (Little, Brown, $18.95, 452 pp.), stayed in my mind because of Inman's consummate decency and deft touch in handling Southern, smalltown newspapering. So, too, Mona Simpson's family business in *Anywhere But Here* (Alfred A. Knopf, $18.95, $6.95 paper, 406 pp.) and Vance Bourjaily's family business in *The Great Fake Book* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, $17.95, 305 pp.), weigh on me for their convincing atmosphere, as do Julian Barnes's *Staring at the Sun* (Alfred A. Knopf, $15.95, 197 pp.) and Georges Perec's *Life: A User's Manual* (Godine, $24.95, 608 pp.) for their technical brilliance, and Vladimir Voinovich's *Moscow 2042* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $16.95, 400 pp.) for its sardonic verve.

Several books enriched autobiography — Arthur Miller's moralistic *Timebends* (Grove Press, $24.95, 640 pp.), Anthony Burgess's revelatory *Little Wilson & Big God* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, $22.50, 460 pp.), and Melvin Konner's somewhat bitter *Becoming a Doctor* (Viking, $19.95, 390 pp.). Biography could be proud of many works, among which I especially liked Robert Ferguson's *Enigma: The Life of Knut Hamsun* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $30, 453 pp.) for its daring, fairminded choice of subject, Annie Cohen-Solal's *Sartre* (Pantheon, $25, 555 pp.) for its investigztive digging, and David Herbert Donald's *Look Homeward: The Life of Thomas Wolfe* (Little, Brown, $25, 502 pp.) for its judicious handling of all pros and cons, its confidence and readable style.

In non-fiction, I respect James Gleick's *Chaos* (Viking, $19.95, 352 pp.) for inviting us into cutting-edge science without making compromises, and Randy Shilts's *And the Band Played On* (St. Martin's Press, $24.95, 630 pp.) for its well-justified anger. Lincoln Caplan's *The Tenth Justice* (Alfred A. Knopf, $19.95, 325 pp.) covered a rarely touched-on subject — the work of the solicitor general — with novelistic pace and inside scoops. Cultural history flourished because some authors bothered to widen the focus we had traditionally given to familiar subjects: James Patterson in *The Dread Disease: Cancer and Modern American Culture* (Harvard University Press, $25.95, 416 pp.), Joseph Horowitz in *Understanding Toscanini* (Alfred A. Knopf, $30, 492 pp.), Thomas Bender in *New York Intellect* (Alfred A. Knopf, $25, 422 pp.) and Todd Gitlin in *The Sixties* (Bantam, $19.95, 513 pp.). All will help to shape history.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 690)

ture of just-war reasoning. We agree, in short, that nonviolence is not for pacifists alone, and that just law and democratic governance are crucial examples of nonviolent conflict resolution.

These are important agreements. Had these themes framed the American Catholic debate since 1965, both church and country would have been better served. Peter Steinfels agrees with this, as a general proposition. Our differences lie in our sense of the "fact" of an American Catholic heritage of thought on these questions prior to 1965; in our reading of what has happened since then; on my rendering of that history; and on the conditions for the possibility of a wiser debate in the future.

To Peter Steinfels's questions about my methodology and "fairness," may I say this. In the course of my research I (not my research assistants) read, in addi-

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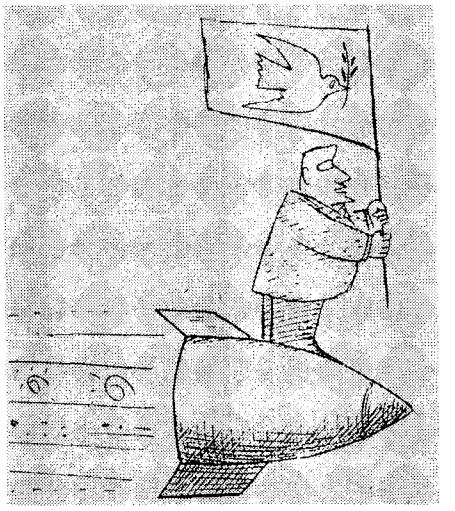
tion to the scholarly literature, some 1,004 editorials, columns, and essays in *Commonweal*, *America*, the *National Catholic Reporter*, *Worldview*, *The Christian Century*, and *Christianity and Crisis*. The great majority of these came from *America* and *Commonweal* (approximately 54 percent came from *America* and 42 percent from *Commonweal*). As I said twice in my book, I regard *Commonweal* as the most distinguished lay-edited journal of Catholic opinion in America. I certainly have no "bias" against *Commonweal*.

Reflecting on this research, I concluded that there have been eight major shifts at the "contextual" level of the Catholic debate since 1965. I tried to illustrate these shifts by representative selections from a vast amount of material. I was neither writing a history of *America* and *Commonweal* editorials, nor doing detailed exegeses of several hundred editorial statements. I was trying to illustrate, for example, how the emergence of anti-anticommunism and a form of mirror-image analysis of U.S./Soviet relations had shaped American Catholic perceptions of world realities. Charging the United States with a willingness "to sacrifice innocent lives in pursuit of its interests" in a major editorial statement on the KAL 007 shootdown strikes me as an example of this problem. That was not the only point made in *Commonweal*'s KAL 007 editorial. *But the point was made*. And it illustrates the problem I was addressing.

Then there is the question of changed Catholic perceptions of America. The line between radical estrangement on the "Amerika" model and the criticisms acknowledged by Peter Steinfels may be difficult to define. But I believe it was crossed on numerous occasions.

Did *Commonweal*'s editors believe, with columnist Frank Getlein, in a venereal disease theory of U.S. foreign policy? I don't believe they did, and I say that in my book (Steinfels suggests that Getlein was "Swiftian;" I shouldn't like to put a seismometer to Dean Swift's grave just now, to record the corpse spinning at 3,000 rpms). But by publishing such material, *Commonweal* was defining the boundaries of reasonable discourse. Those boundaries were drawn so wide that William Stringfellow ("It is the radical dehumanization of society by war . . . that justifies comparison of the United States with first-century Rome, and which prompts Christians to discern in the incumbent American regime that spirit of the Antichrist which Christians . . . exposed and opposed in the Roman state.") and Getlein were deemed inside the boundaries, if at the margins. That was the shift I was illustrating. There are dozens of such examples. Not all were as grotesque as Stringfellow and Getlein. But the very grotesqueries illustrate just how bad things had gotten. I regard this as a tragedy of the first magnitude, not as a way to score cheap debating points.

This process of boundary setting



skewed the entire spectrum of debate. This was the case with Raymond Schroth's My Lai essay, which Steinfels claims I unfairly represent. Schroth distinguished his criticism from that of what he termed the "more radical critics" of the American experiment. But he also wrote that the "first function" of a new and wiser president would be "to accustom the American people, for the first time, to accepting the fact that the nation has gone off course. Overcome by its sudden experience of power, it has been carried away by a distorted notion of Manifest Destiny to the point that it lost sight of its respect for human life and its belief in the brotherhood of man." In my book, I wrote that Schroth accepted the view that William Calley symbolized "American corruption." That is an accurate formulation of an important current in Schroth's position. One doesn't have to spell America as "Amerika" (1960s' version of that spelling) to believe that the country had "lost sight of its respect for human life and its belief in the brotherhood of man."

[redacted] stand by my assertion that a thorough review of Catholic and ecumenical opinion journals since 1965 reveals patterns of neo-isolationism, psychologized understandings of "peace," anti-anticommunism, a deteriorated sense of the moral worthiness of the American experiment, and the other key "themes of abandonment" identified in my book. Were those patterns advanced or challenged by the editorials and essays I cite (and the several hundred more I researched, but could not cite for reasons of space)? I believe that, on balance, they were far more advanced than challenged. I am not making judgments about individuals' intentions and motivations here. None of us is infallible in making judgments on these highly complex matters. I am judging strictly from the printed public record. It is a sad record indeed. To move beyond it, which both Steinfels and I want to do, requires an acknowledgment of just how bad things had gotten — not to score polemical points, but to learn from (all of our) errors of perception and judgment.

Peter Steinfels suggests that I believe it was the just-war heritage that American Catholic intellectuals, activists, and religious leaders abandoned over the past generation. Just-war thinking did deteriorate — indeed, in some cases completely disappeared — in the "engaged" community; it also took a battering from several bishops. But what was abandoned was considerably more than just-war thinking. What was abandoned was the distinctive Catholic understanding of peace as *tranquillitas ordinis* as that had evolved in the American Catholic context. The notion that *tranquillitas ordinis* in the modern world had something to do with democracy was noticeably absent from the post-1965 American Catholic debate. Since this is the larger context that gives moral meaning to just-war rea-

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soning, the abandonment of this classic Catholic concept of peace led ineluctably to the deliquescence of just-war theory within the Catholic attentive public.

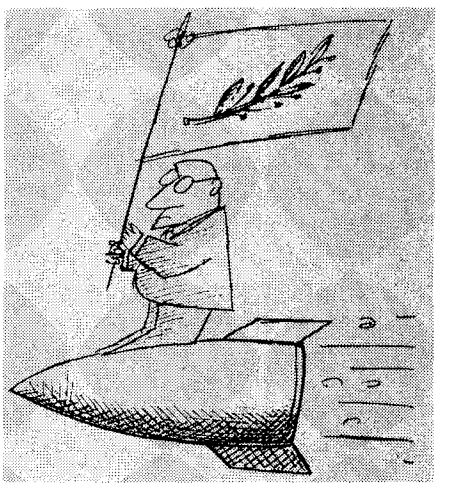
It is the reclamation *and development* of the classic heritage in its fullness — not just in its just-war theory component — that is one crucial precondition to a wiser argument in the future. What are some of the substantive concerns that should occupy the process of reclamation and development?

Peter Steinfels does not discuss my claim that the American bishops developed, tacitly, a theology of democracy in their nineteenth-century contest with anti-Catholic nativism. If this extension of the classic historiography of American Catholicism can be sustained, it would help ground a new and wiser American Catholic theology and politics of peace and freedom. It would help make clear that "engaging in the war/peace debate" involves much more than judgments on weapons, strategies, and tactics; it has to do with understandings of political community and its institutionalization. The now-epidemic notion that American Catholicism had nothing of significance to say on questions of U.S. national security policy until Vietnam — and the guilt that seems to follow from that notion — has got to be challenged. I suspect Steinfels agrees. Further conversation is in order here.

Secondly, I am quite clear (and say so in the book) that not all pacifists base their claims on biblical literalism. But I also argue that the most salient pacifist statements of the past generation have been on literalist warrants. Dorothy Day and Eileen Egan of the Catholic Worker did this (although Worker pacifism had parallel roots in Peter Maurin's Christian personalism). Bishop Carroll Dozier of Memphis did this, in a seminal 1971 pastoral letter reprinted in full by *Commonweal*. Other bishops did this during the new nuclear debates of the 1980s. Catholic activists continue to do it today, as do some prominent Catholic intellectuals (the distinguished Scripture scholar John McKenzie, for example, made a blatantly fundamentalist case for Catholic pacifism in a 1986 interview).

All of this seems problematic to me, as I think it does to Steinfels. Both of us would be grateful for a morally urgent, intellectually sophisticated American Catholic pacifism. We are waiting for Stanley Hauerwas, as it were. Perhaps I'm missing something, but the Catholic Hauerwas has yet to be pointed out to me.

Suppose he or she were to appear. Then what? My suggestion is that pacifists and just-war theorists work together at the level of practical reason: in resisting tyranny and in building institutions of international public life that would more adequately reflect the moral horizon of *tranquillitas ordinis*. Prospects for this common activity are made less likely by attempts to intellectually "blend" the two traditions: which brings us to "nuclear pacifism."



"Nuclear pacifists" do not reject the use of nuclear weapons on pacifist grounds but on the just-war grounds of proportionality and discrimination. Thus nuclear "pacifism" is often a rhetorical intensifier, the hidden assumption being that a pacifist commitment, in whatever form, carries greater moral weight. I doubt the latter judgment, and in any event I still fail to see how "nuclear pacifism" constitutes a genuine third voice in the argument.

So why worry about it? Paul Ramsey gave the answer in 1963 and 1966: the evolution of international public order according to the vision of John XXIII and Vatican II has to be through, not around, the canons of just-war theory. This is what virtually all American Catholic pacifists deny; this is a basic point of departure between pacifists and just-war theorists. And this is what is confused and muddled by the hybrid "nuclear pacifism."

I have no doubts about the failings of just-war theorists over the past generation. Modern historical scholarship on just-war theory has been impressive indeed. But just-war theorists' failure to forcefully take up Ramsey's challenge helped create the intellectual and cultural conditions for the confusions that followed.

In the fourth place, we need a fresh evaluation of the men and women who were influential in shaping the Catholic debate over the past generation. Did the apocalypticism of Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton have a "leveling" effect on their political vision? Has Gordon Zahn, the best in American Catholic pacifism, still failed to move the pacifist discussion significantly beyond literalist warrants? Did the Berrigans mark a critical point in the "abandonment of the heritage," through their importation of New Left thematics into the Catholic debate? Steinfels seems to agree that there were problems in the thought of these key figures. But what should we retain? What must be rejected?

Fifthly, my book is a challenge to the tyranny of Washington, D.C. in American Catholic thought on war and peace. The first order of business in a new Catholic debate is theology: Catholicism must ground a new *politics* of peace and freedom in a dynamically orthodox *theology* of peace and freedom. Resources for this are available in the incarnational humanism of John Paul II and major Catholic conciliar theologians. New ecclesiological understandings are also required if the church is not to trade its birthright for their pottage of a lobbying model of "engagement." In addition, American Catholicism needs to think through the classic Catholic political theory that allowed the American bishops to evolve their theology of democracy. These issues seem basic to me. But priority attention, in the "engaged" Catholic community and among many Catholic social ethicists, remains focused on test-bans and SDI and all the rest of the current policy agenda. Isn't

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this a problem? How should it be addressed? What would addressing it mean for the public roles of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the United States Catholic Conference?

When we do get to politics, there remains an immense task of clarification at hand. I am pleased that a former *Commonweal* editor, James Finn, has described my final chapter on the politics of peace and freedom as a "deeply pondered act of political imagination, itself flowing from the heritage of *tranquillitas ordinis*" — which suggests, I think, something more than the unacknowledged partisanship with which Steinfels charges me. Be that as it may, the classic Catholic heritage, in its linking of peace, security, freedom, and justice, could, if reclaimed and developed today, "push" policy arguments beyond their present polarizations.

This is what I meant by arguing that it is time to think "beyond" standard arms-control theory. This "pushing" could also move us beyond the "détente vs. containment" morass to a focus on how U.S. policy might promote pluralization and liberalization in the USSR. Peter Steinfels is also interested in this kind of "pushing." I think it will most likely take place if it emerges from a reclaimed and developed classic Catholic heritage. It certainly won't take place if the current policy agenda as defined inside the Beltway achieves a kind of canonical status in American Catholicism.

Finally, getting ahead of the intellectual curve is what I and my colleagues are doing in the James Madison Foundation. The scholars' and practitioners' seminar we are conducting, in cooperation with the Woodstock Theological Center and with funding from the U.S. Institute of Peace, has involved such major theological and public policy figures as John Langan, S.J., Michael Novak, David Hollenbach, S.J., R. James Woolsey, David Newsom, Harold Saunders, James Watkins, Joseph Nye, Harry Summers, Owen Harries, William V. O'Brien, and James Turner Johnson in a common exploration of basic issues in the ethics, war, and peace debate. It is this kind of discussion, across the barricades of the public policy debate, that the Catholic heritage urges us all to. I am happy to be able to be an agent in re-creating that kind of discussion. And I look forward to a wiser debate emerging from it.

GEORGE WEIGEL

The author replies:

One of the problems that I found with George Weigel's *Tranquillitas Ordinis* was "the gap between the book's occasional pleas for constructive rethinking and its otherwise harsh prosecutorial tone." I appreciate the fact that Weigel's response to my critique is written in the former mode, and that he searches for common ground between us. He offers seven paragraphs each beginning, "We agree. . . ." With the second through seventh of these paragraphs I am indeed in agreement.

The first of these paragraphs, however, bears on what Weigel later calls "our differences" regarding the history of Catholic discussions of war and peace since 1965, and here it would be no service to obscure our disagreement.

Having first described those discussions as "less than satisfactory" (what prolonged, heated controversy isn't?), Weigel goes on to write of them in terms of "unfortunate effects"; "how bad things had gotten" (twice); "a tragedy of the first magnitude"; and "a sad record indeed."

Weigel thinks it necessary for us all to acknowledge this "sad record" as a starting point for a "wiser debate." On the contrary, I think that any debate which uses Weigel's description as a point of departure will not be wiser. It will be biased from the outset, and more importantly it will have dodged many real-world questions about actually applying Catholic war-peace moral principles rather than only discussing them academically. Agreed, we should learn from our errors. Let's not add to them.

Had I been appointed by God to orchestrate the debates of the last twenty years, I would of course have arranged many things differently. But unlike Weigel I am firmly of the belief that those who opposed the war in Vietnam, "grotesqueries" and all, were far more true to the Catholic heritage than those, like the bishops' conference of that period and a number of just-war scholars, who either supported the war or stood on the sidelines without any real political-moral engagement.

Many of the patterns Weigel detects in the war-peace debates since 1965—neo-isolationism, psychologized understanding of "peace," etc.—are real enough. In some cases, however, these patterns rose and fell and have never had the dominance Weigel states, certainly not in *Commonweal*; and in other cases the specific manifestations of such patterns, e.g., a reduced concern with the Soviet Communist threat, were perfectly plausible and no more constituted, on the face of it, "abandonment" of the Catholic heritage than "development" of it.

George Weigel is quite right to suggest that "the boundaries of reasonable discourse" were redefined by the Vietnam experience. Unfortunately, his book is enormously imprecise in trying to establish just what the new boundaries were. And his implied conclusion that the new boundaries were necessarily a bad thing simply begs numerous questions.

Take the examples in his letter. *The KAL 007 editorial:* Is Weigel really suggesting that the U.S. has *not* shown itself willing to sacrifice innocent lives in pursuit of its interests? Where has he been? But that statement of unhappy fact still does not—nor did it in the editorial—constitute a "mirror-image analysis of U.S./Soviet relations."

The Getlein column and Stringfellow quote: These were, it should be emphasized, minor items in the magazine; the importance Weigel attaches to them makes me wonder whether he understands the reality of weekly journalism. These items certainly did not compare to the occasions on which the "boundaries of reasonable discourse" were explicitly discussed and the genuine "grotesqueries" of the hard New Left were severely criticized, by luminaries including Stanley Hoffmann, Richard John Neuhaus, and the editors. But I am sorry that I cannot work up George Weigel's shock at either of these examples. Getlein's column, for example, was consistently hyperbolic. In the context of rather sleazy arms sales abroad, he com-

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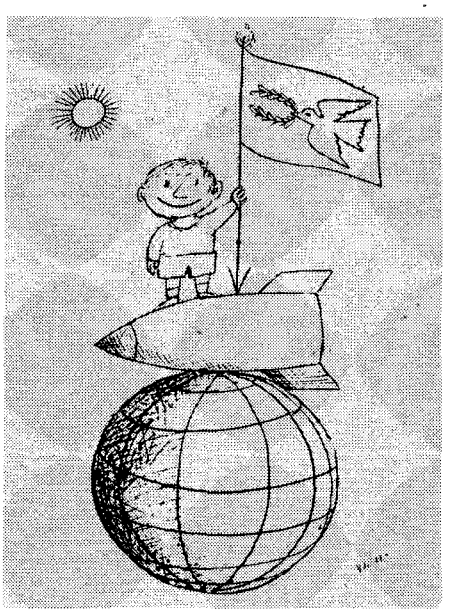
pared the U.S. to a prostitute. Big deal. Not long after that, in the context of the notorious Zionism-as-racism resolution, he compared the UN to a prostitute. Did he or the editors therefore have a "venereal disease theory" of the UN? Maybe he was just suffering from an impoverishment of polemical imagination. Weigel's effort to sniff out blasphemy here is altogether silly.

As for the sin of *quoting* Stringfellow (in a short item that also quoted Paul VI and contrasted the strong tone of both statements to some anodyne remarks at the White House by Cardinal Krol), it surely represented the anger and desperation of the days surrounding President Nixon's Christmas bombing of Hanoi. To quote an anti-war activist's use of the word "Anti-Christ" under such circumstances (and the item specifically linked it to the Nixon administration) does not scandalize me the way it does George Weigel. If he thinks such dramatic language made its entry into Catholic journalism during the sixties and seventies, he should note how the distinguished Paulist editor of the *Catholic World*, James M. Gillis, described Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945: "The most powerful blow ever delivered against Christian civilization and moral law."

The Schroth essay: Now this is indeed more serious. The Calley case *did* represent "American corruption." The nation *had* "gone off course." Why is Weigel so apparently taken aback by these statements? Perhaps he does not recall that millions of Americans, including major political figures, made excuses for the My Lai massacre, which the military itself had tried to cover up rather than prosecute. Schroth's denunciation was in the very best tradition of being faithful to the American experiment—and explicitly affirmed the spiritual base of the nation that he wanted redeemed. Should *Commonweal* have defined the "boundaries of reasonable discourse" so as to exclude an essay like Schroth's? *That* would have been "a sad record indeed."



I will make only one comment on George Weigel's suggestions for future "reclamation and development" of Catholic thinking. I am afraid that it points up another disagreement between us. Nowhere does Weigel mention *The Challenge of Peace*, the bishops' pastoral on nuclear conflict. And why should he? In *Tranquillitas Ordinis*, he treats it as a "tragically lost opportunity," a document crippled by "central deficiencies . . . a document that, for all its soundness of intention, summed up the abandonment of the heritage."

By contrast, while I welcome basic theological rethinking by pacifists and just-war theorists alike, I believe that the pastoral letter represents an extraordinary achievement and the platform from which any truly effective church-wide assimilation of the Catholic heritage must be mounted.

That comment made, I wish to return to the previous point and ask what "boundaries of reasonable discourse" are implicit in Weigel's writings, whether in *Tranquillitas Ordinis* or this letter. My impression is that Weigel would set those boundaries so as to (1) make very difficult any discussion of actual *sinfulness* in the conduct of American foreign policy; (2) practically exclude any examination of the possibility that patterns of international behavior quite at odds with our democratic values may be *deeply rooted* in American society and culture; (3) render it unlikely that opinion could be mobilized to reverse a major policy defended, with all the means at its disposal, by the government. I may be mistaken. I hope so.

David Burrell's letter makes an extremely important point. The fact that it could be forgotten today reflects the success of Catholic thinking on war and peace since 1965. I thank him and Roland Laird for their kind words. I must say to Mr. Laird that I do not consider *Tranquillitas Ordinis* an immoral book. If it were, I probably would have had more fun reading and reviewing it. Yes, it may be, in many particulars, misleading, but I don't think deliberately so. And there is much in it, as I wrote, that "may prove a boon in a dialogue that badly needs to take place."

PETER STEINFELS

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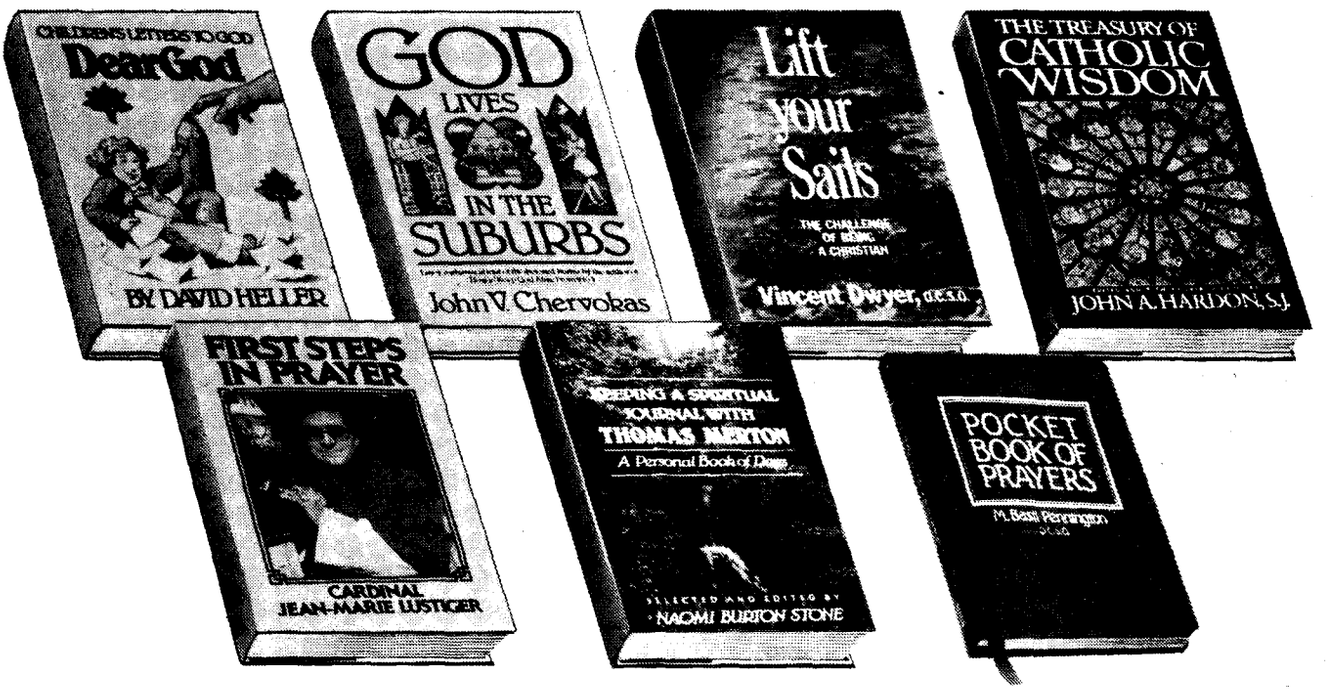

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